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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

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THE ELOPERS

BY JACQUES FUTRELLE

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THE RED BOOK
MAGAZINE

EDITED BY KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN

The July RED BOOK MAGAZINE

ON a little shelf of rock, a mere bracket projecting from the sheer wall of the mountain, lay a man. Black against the blue dome of the sky circled an eagle. Beside the man, on the ledge, trembled a black eaglet. It is the story of that man, that eagle, and that eaglet that Charles G. D. Roberts tells in the splendid narrative "The Sun-Gazer," which will serve to lead the notable collection of short stories in THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE for July. It is a nature story you will never forget, written by the master of nature-fiction.

In the cheerless, stiff, and unalluring "front parlor" of a little white house at Appomatox two men—one immaculate in gray; the other bedraggled in blue—met face to face, and, ensued the most dramatic half-hour in the history of these United States. In an up-stairs room, listening, scarcely breathing, waited a girl. Also in the room below, shrinking from the scene duty compelled him to witness, waited a boy. It is the story of that boy and that girl and that meeting in the stiff and cheerless room that Clara E. Laughlin tells in "The House of Peace" which will prove, we believe, the most successful "Fourth of July story" any American magazine has published in a long time.

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Hand in hand they fled from the voice
which was just saying– "man and wife"
"The Elopers"--Page 177

THE RED BOOK
MAGAZINE

Vol. XI June, 1908 No. 2

The Elopers

BY JACQUES FUTRELLE

Author of "The Simple Case of Susan," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY HENRY HUTT

I.

WEST POINT knows only two unpardonable sins, lying and stupidity. Cadet Gillmore lied, then compounded his offense by persisting in the lie after he had been caught. There really seemed nothing else for an officer and a gentleman to do, although it meant court-martial and expulsion, the ending of a military career at its dawn. There was only a slight chance that the matter would be permitted to take any other course; that he would be allowed to resign, for instance. It was rather hard, too, because it was his last year, and it all came about innocently and simply enough.

Cadet Smythe had received a box from home. Desiring to share its contents only with those fully qualified by youth and beauty really to appreciate exquisite delicacies, he called into play his notorious strategic genius, and—well, it required tactical ability of the highest order to smuggle two pretty girls past the guard-line, up a ten foot rope ladder, and through a window into Cadet Gillmore's room, which, by the way, was only ten feet from the ground and easier of access than Cadet Smythe's. There were reasons why Smythe did this, but they would not have satisfied, even if with decency, they could have been laid before the wooden-headed disciplinarian in charge. Cadet Gillmore was supposed to be away on a short furlough.

First, Cadet Smythe was engaged to one of the girls without her father's knowledge, and being rigidly excluded from the house where she was visiting, he simply had to see her; second, it was impossible to make a picnic of it, because there were three inches of snow on the ground; and third, there were twenty pounds of home-made culinary disaster peculiar to Smythe's appreciation and he had only a seven ounce appetite. There were a dozen other reasons all bearing generally on the propositions: that it would be jolly, that it was the only way for him to see the girl, and that it was nobody's business anyway.

The girls in the case were Eleanor Phillips, whose father objected to Cadet Smythe on the broad ground that he was a "military up-start," whatever degree of ignominy that may express; and Dorothy Langhorne, a singularly distracting young woman with amazing eyes. The mere sight of her made Cadet Gillmore's head swim. They had met two years before. No mere words could give the faintest conception of what he thought of her.

Dorothy didn't want to go to the revel anyway, or rather, to be precise, she real-

ized that neither she nor Eleanor should go because—well, the proprieties. It was another tribute to Cadet Smythe's tactical ability that she did go, and that, too, after she had sat in final judgment.

"No, I really don't think it would be nice," she had told Eleanor.

"Oh, nothing that's any fun is nice," said Eleanor, thus broadly generalizing a condition long recognized.

"I wont go," said Dorothy.

"Well, I'm going, whether you do or not," said Eleanor.

Then Dorothy had to go, smearing the general disgrace of it all over three persons thinly.

Now, Cadet Gillmore didn't know anything about the revel in his room when he returned at eleven o'clock that night. But he joined the party enthusiastically. Innocently enough, they waxed merry, and the laughter of the girls swept through the room and out into the corridor where it started sleeping echoes into sudden activity; also a somnambulent individual whose duty it was to see, so far as lay in his power, that no cadet, by any mischance, ever enjoyed himself.

This individual rapped on the door of Cadet Gillmore's room. Inside there was instant panic, and officially listening ears were properly shocked by a slight feminine shriek, by the rustle of skirts, the hurry of feet then—silence.

The rustle and hurry meant that Cadet Smythe had leaped from the window and that Eleanor had leaped into his arms. They really were engaged, you know, whether her father liked it or not. Then Dorothy had started to climb out.

"Run," she whispered to the two below. They ran. Then her ankle turned and she fell back into the room, almost fainting, just as the Individual rapped again, insistently.

"Quick, behind the door!" whispered Cadet Gillmore to Dorothy. "I must answer the knock. He wont come in."

Gillmore opened the door. He was very erect in his uniform of gray, very calm, but very white about the mouth as he raised his hand in salute.

"Who is in here, Mr. Gillmore?" asked the Individual.

"No one, sir," said Cadet Gillmore. You see, he couldn't say anything else.

"Who has been here?"

"No one," said Gillmore.

His lips closed into a thin line; he knew the consequences.

"I heard a woman laugh," said the Individual, looking at him keenly.

"You are mistaken," said the cadet coolly.

There was the least little pause as the two men faced each other unwaveringly. Then the Individual sniffed; yes, it was a sniff.

"Do you use violet-perfume?" he demanded.

"Frequently," said the cadet, unblushingly.

"Will you let me come in?"

"No, sir."

"Will you say on your honor that there is not now and has not been a woman in your room?" insisted the Individual.

"On my honor," the cadet said steadily.

There was no retreat after that.

"I shouldn't like to have you make a mistake, Mr. Gillmore," said the Individual, not unkindly.

"I have made none, sir," replied the cadet, still steadily.

"Very well," and the Individual spoke sharply now. "I shall have to lay this matter before the commanding-officer. Report to him to-morrow at ten."

"Yes, sir," said the cadet.

It was equivalent to an arrest. The Individual so intended it; the cadet so understood it. And Dorothy knew; once her father had been colonel commanding there.

The Individual passed on and Gillmore closed the door.

"You lied to him," Dorothy gasped.

It didn't sound well from her.

"Certainly," said Cadet Gillmore.

"You will have to leave West Point," she went on.

"I know it," he replied, and his lips were closely drawn.

Dorothy winced a little at the pain in her ankle, but announced her intention of going. Then Gillmore climbed down the ladder, assisted her out, and started on with her as a matter of course.

"No, no, no!" she said hurriedly. "You

Innocently enough they waxed merry

mustn't. It would only make it worse if we were caught. I must go alone."

Then, limping, and without a single good-night, she ran across an open space, into the darkness.

Thus Cadet Gillmore lied. He was an officer and a gentleman. What could he have done?

II.

Cadet Gillmore awoke suddenly with the feeling that there was some one else in the room. There was. It was Cadet Smythe. He was sitting on a trunk lighting his pipe, having burglariously entered by the window. The hour was 2 A. M. For here, be it known, trivial things like rules, even West Point rules, were not made to hold Cadet Smythe.

"Hello," said Gillmore anxiously. "Get away all right?"

"Yes," said Smythe. "Not a soul saw us. What happened to Dorothy? We thought she was right behind us!"

Gillmore told him all about it, and Smythe listened with deep interest, his face growing more serious as the story proceeded. At its end he whistled.

"It means you leave West Point," he said finally.

"Yes, I know," said Gillmore.

He was wondering if Smythe would be decent about it, and he watched Smythe's strong face curiously as that young gentleman paced back and forth, his pipe bubbling cheerfully.

"Of course I go, too," said Smythe at last.

Gillmore felt immensely relieved. It was good to know that a fear he had had for another's manhood had proven without foundation.

"Of course you do not," said Gillmore.

Smythe turned on him abruptly.

"Why not?" he demanded sharply. "Now look here, Gillmore, I'm not a blamed ninny, you know. I caused all this thing and I'll take what's coming to me. I tell you," he said, and he spoke as if the entire matter were already settled out of hand, "I might elope with Nell—I mean Miss Phillips, and that would—but that wouldn't do you any good would it?"

"No," said Gillmore, quizzically, "although I dare say it would be a source of great satisfaction to you."

"Well, it might help," Smythe urged. "If it ever became known—her name I mean—and all that sort of thing. I—I rather think it would help."

"Not me," said Gillmore. "I lied, you know."

Smythe looked curiously at this man whose career had been sacrificed upon the altar of folly and by no act of his own, but there was no trace of anger in his face, nor blame. Yet Smythe knew how he felt; he knew how any man would feel under those circumstances.

"Suppose I should go to the colonel, man to man, and tell him all about it?" he suggested. "He would understand how you were dragged in."

"That would mean nothing," said Gillmore, "except perhaps we would both go."

Smythe savagely kicked the box which had contained the feast; then, after a while, wandered away, disconsolate, to his room, swearing roundly, and dreamed foolish dreams of Eleanor Phillips and runaway marriages and other things which should not intrude themselves into the mind of a young man who seeks a brilliant future. In his dreams somehow, it appeared that an elopement with Eleanor would settle the problem, but dreams are illogical things.

When Cadet Gillmore presented himself to the colonel at ten o'clock that morning he was received gravely; he had been thinking of it all, and the inexorable rule which applied to his case seemed for the first time a little unjust.

The colonel talked to him almost as a father, and lent hopes of permission to resign.

When Gillmore was on his way to see Dorothy an hour later, he met Smythe, who had previously heard an account of the interview with the colonel. Now, evidently, some strange, agitating thing had happened to Smythe, for he winked almost exultingly and nervously fingered several telegraph-blanks on which he had written. He passed on and handed over the blanks to an operator in the little telegraph-office. As the operator grasped the import of the messages he grinned cheerfully and Smythe blushed.

"Going to do it this afternoon, eh?" the operator asked enigmatically.

"Yes, and if you breathe a word of it I'll ring your neck," said Smythe fiercely. "If her father knew! Great Scott!"

Meanwhile, Gillmore saw Dorothy. The ankle was almost well again, she told him, and then she plunged into the serious matter at hand.

"What is going to happen?" she asked.

"I hope, in fact I may say, that I shall be permitted to resign, on account of illness," said Gillmore.

"Permitted—to—resign," gasped Dorothy, and disaster was in her every tone. "Give up your military future?"

"I lied, you know," said Gillmore. "And they know it."

"But this is your last year," she protested.

"Well, it isn't my fault you know," he began. Then, as she flushed: "No, I don't mean that it's anybody's fault, particularly yours. I meant simply that I was not anxious to give up the career I had planned, except—"

Then Dorothy wept, frankly and copiously, and Gillmore stood helplessly by.

"Oh, I beg your pardon I thought it was some one else"

Suddenly, in the midst of her weeping, Dorothy straightened up and said:

"Oh!"

It might have meant almost anything. Then she smiled.

"I've an idea," she bubbled.

Gillmore had, by this time, forgotten all about the evils which beset him, in contemplation of that wonderful creature, Dorothy.

"My uncle, the secretary of war!" said Dorothy, talking rapidly, and her face flushed. "He's in Washington. He's a sort of a—a—something; anyhow, he has an awful lot to say about what they do at West Point. We'll go to him and tell him and then he'll fix it."

"No," said Gillmore. "It wouldn't be fair to you."

"Silly," said Dorothy, and a charming chin was uptilted defiantly. "You have nothing to say about it. I'll tell him. He'll believe me; he always does. I'll tell him how we happened to be in your —your room—and everything."

Gillmore was about to protest again.

"We can take the 1:55 train together from Garrison and be in Washington late

to-night, and arrange matters at once. You will go. I was the cause of it all, and now I'll fix it. I can wind my uncle around my finger—so."

Gillmore looked upon woman, radiant, eager, and yielded. Perhaps she might—it was no fault of his—his career, too!

"I hate to have you feel any way responsible for what happened," he said. "And, of course, I would not say I don't mind leaving West Point, but I'm afraid you think I behaved very badly."

"Behaved badly?" she exclaimed. "It was splendid of you, perfectly splendid. Meet me at the 1:55 train."

Cadet Gillmore went his way, treading on air.

III.

Telegram from Mrs. Laura Langley Ashburton, aunt of Eleanor Phillips, to Mr. Andrew Phillips, father of Eleanor Phillips:

2:30 P. M., West Point, Feb. 24.
MR. ANDREW PHILLIPS,
171 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY.
Eleanor has eloped with Cadet Smythe. Left Garrison's here at 1:55 today, reach New York 3:25. Dine at Hector's. Leave by Pennsylvania at 4:55 for Washington, arrive there 10:55. Probably stop with Cadet Smythe's sister, 1111 Massylvania Ave.

LAURA.

It wouldn't be fair to tell how Mrs. Ashburton got this information. Anyway she got it, and it was the longest telegram she ever sent. She felt it was an awful waste of money.

IV.

Dorothy and Cadet Gillmore were sitting cosily side by side on the 1:55 train, half way to New York. Dorothy was still explaining—it was really a very long explanation that had to be made — and Gillmore was listening contentedly. The real purpose of the trip didn't matter particularly just at that moment.

"You see," Dorothy was saying, "it wouldn't have done a bit of good to telegraph to my Uncle Secretary; and, besides, I couldn't have put it all in ten words to save my life. And I—I just couldn't have written it to him. It would have seemed so—seemed so—"

"Yes, it would have," said Gillmore.

"So, the only thing to do was to go see him. He'll be dreadfully shocked and say he wont do it; then he'll smile and say he will."

Thus lightly does woman speak of the abject slavery in which she holds man.

The conversation drifted into more important channels: for instance, the color of Dorothy's hair and her eyes. But after a while she remembered something and sat up straight, suddenly.

"That's a beautiful photograph in your room," she observed icily.

"Yes, she is beautiful, isn't she?" asked Gillmore.

"Perfectly exquisite," said Dorothy coldly. "Who is it?" she asked quite casually.

"My sister," said Gillmore.

"Oh!" said Dorothy.

For some strange reason she smiled radiantly.

After a while New York was reached, and Gillmore led the way down the long platform, conspicuous in his uniform of gray. From the carriage-stand a driver rushed forward, seized their small satchels, looked at Cadet Gillmore, grinned, then—awful fact—he winked.

"Twenty-third Street ferry," said Cadet Gillmore, sharply.

"Oh, I understand," said the cabby meaningly. "Jump in quick. I knew you by the uniform."

Dorothy and the cadet stepped inside, the door was slammed, and they were about to move away. Then the door was thrown open violently and the red, excited face of an elderly gentleman with aggressive side-whiskers was thrust in. Dorothy screamed and drew back, startled.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," said the elderly gentleman. He was startled, too. "I thought it was some one else."

The cab rattled away toward Broadway. It drew up in front of Hector's. The cabby jumped down and ran to the door.

"Here you are, sir," he grinned.

"Why, it's a restaurant," exclaimed Dorothy, and from her tone one might

"How dare you, sir?" he began thunderously

have thought a restaurant was the last depth of iniquity.

"Good idea," commented Gillmore. "I'm starving. We have an hour and a half to get to the ferry."

"Yes, sir, that's all right," said the cabby. "Right up those steps. Everything is waiting. It was all fixed."

They climbed the stairs, were seized upon by an obsequious waiter and ushered into a private dining-room. There was one table, only one, set for two.

"You see, we are ready, sir," said the waiter. "You will be served immediately."

They were. They took it as a matter of course.

It was at the *entrée* that the door was thrown open fiercely and an elderly gentleman with aggressive side-whiskers thrust himself in.

"How dare you, sir?" he began thunderously.

Then, looking into the amazed faces before him he blushed crimson.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," he stammered. "I—I thought you were some one else."

He disappeared as suddenly as he had come.

"His face seems awfully familiar to me," said Dorothy.

"Yes, he's the lunatic who looked in the cab," said Gillmore. "Something seems to be troubling him."

"I wonder what it can be?" said Dorothy.

"I can't imagine," said the cadet.

Dinner engrossed their attention for an hour, then they left Hector's and the cabby appeared at their side.

"Yes, sir. Twenty-third Street ferry now, sir. I understand. It's all right, sir."

Away they rattled. Half an hour later they were in the great depot in Jersey City, where they were eagerly seized by a grinning attendant who took their bags by force, and rushed them down the platform.

"I understand, sir," he said, and another awful fact, h e winked. "Right this way, private apartment."

Wonderingly they were piloted into the small room and the door slammed. Dorothy gasped as she sat down.

"Did you arrange for all this?" she asked.

"No," said Gillmore. "It's just coming to us. But it's what we want, so there's no objection."

The train moved out, and watching the hideous panorama of Jersey City through the same window they were silent for a time.

"Something is going to happen in a minute," said Gillmore, finally.

"What?" asked Dorothy, a little startled.

An elderly gentleman with aggressive side-whiskers peered in, saw, blushed, and stammered:

"Oh, I beg your pardon. I thought you were some one else."

Then he disappeared.

"That's it," said Gillmore, triumphantly.

"His face is awfully familiar to me," said Dorothy again. "What can he want?"

"I think it's some sort of a game," said Gillmore easily. "He's It."

Newark, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and at last the lights of Washington.

"I'll go to the Hotel Hilliard to-night where my uncle is," said Dorothy, "and we'll see him together early to-morrow."

The train pulled into the station and a grinning attendant rushed them to a closed carriage. They were getting quite accustomed to it; they did not ask questions nor protest. The driver of the carriage was closing the door.

"Hotel Hilliard," Gillmore ordered.

He knew instinctively they were going there anyway.

"Lordy, suh, I knows," and a cheerful grin spread far back in an ebony countenance. "Yas, suh. I knows all about it."

The driver scrambled to his seat.

"Now, Mr. Side-whiskers, and we're off," said Gillmore. "He'll tag us again in a minute."

Dorothy laughed a little, and as if echoing Gillmore's remarks the ruby face of the elderly gentleman appeared in the carriage-door.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," said Gillmore quickly. "I thought you were some one else."

The elderly gentleman's lips formed the words mechanically, as they were taken out of his mouth.

Then the carriage turned into Pennsylvania Avenue. Dorothy laughed again and grew a little hysterical; so much so that Gillmore had to take hold of her hand to soothe her. It was an awfully nice hand, smooth as velvet and warm and cosy. Gillmore held it all the way up Pennsylvania Avenue. She grew much better.

The carriage drew up at the side entrance of the Hilliard, and there the usual thing happened. Grinning attendants rushed them to the second floor.

"But look here—" Gillmore began, protestingly.

"Oh, we know, sir," said an attendant. "He's in here. Sorry, but he's deaf as a post. The only one we could find, though."

Dorothy and Gillmore looked about them. They were in a small parlor off the main parlor, and now approaching them was a brusquely business-like gentleman of the cloth. Just behind him was a woman, evidently an employee of the hotel; the attendant had gone.

"Join hands," brusquely commanded the gentleman of the cloth.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, I thought you were some one else"

Dorothy's hand involuntarily sought Gillmore's — and found it. It always seemed to be just where she could reach it in great emergencies like this.

"Two witnesses are needed," said the gentleman of the cloth. "There's only one here."

Just at that psychological moment the door opened suddenly and an elderly gentleman with aggressive side-whiskers rushed in with hand upraised.

"I forbid—" he began.

"You'll do," said the gentleman of the cloth. "Stand still, please."

Then he began mumbling words as he groped uncertainly through the pages of a book he held—a black book. For one brief instant Dorothy and Gillmore stood silent, then Dorothy screamed.

"Why, he's marrying us," she said.

Deafly the brusque voice droned on to the "love, honor, and obey" clause, then Gillmore raised his hand imperiously.

"Stop!" he commanded.

Being absorbed in his book, and deaf, the gentleman of the cloth calmly proceeded.

"Stop! I say," Gillmore cried again. "How dare you marry us when we are not looking?"

The droning voice went on. Quick, vigorous action was necessary.

"Run!" said Dorothy.

Hand in hand they fled from the voice which was just saying: "I pronounce you man and wife."

Dorothy never recalled clearly what happened after that. When she fully recovered she was in the apartments of her uncle and aunt on the third floor. The secretary of war had gone down-stairs seeking a reason for her sudden appearance. In the lobby he met an elderly gentleman with aggressive side-whiskers, who was raging, positively raging.

"What's the matter, Phillips?" asked the secretary.

"Matter?" roared the elderly gentleman. "Look at that confounded telegram just forwarded to me from New York."

He extended a hand trembling with anger and the secretary took the yellow slip.

It said:

> Knowing you objected to me I ran away with Eleanor this afternoon and we were married. Intended to go to my sister's in Washington, and later come to New York for your forgiveness, but missed train, so came to Peekskill instead. Both send love.
>
> SMYTHE.

The secretary of war laughed.

"Love!" snorted Mr. Phillips.

V.

The next day the Secretary of War went out for a walk, early, and being a busy man stopped in his office to dispose of two or three trivial matters. There Dorothy and Cadet Gillmore presented themselves, blushing guiltily when the surprised eye of the Secretary focused them.

"Well?" he asked of Dorothy.

He had never met the cadet.

Dorothy promptly wept—she had always found that an excellent way to begin with Uncle Secretary—then she introduced them.

"Un—uncle, this is Ca—ca—cadet Gill—Gi—Gillmore," she said.

The secretary glared fiercely at Gillmore, whom he blamed vaguely for this sudden outburst, then he took his pretty niece in his arms to comfort her. Lucky secretary!

"There, there!" he said soothingly. "What is it?"

"Ca—ca—cadet Gill—gi—gillmore is going to be expelled from West Point," Dorothy bubbled at last.

The secretary seemed surprised, then glanced inquiringly at the cadet.

"For lying," said Gillmore, grimly answering the question. He was not a man to soften a fact with gentle words.

"Lying?" repeated the secretary. "Lying? But—but what has my niece to do with it?"

"He—he lied because I made him," said Dorothy. "I'll—I'll tell you when I stop cry—crying."

There was a tense silence. The secretary led Dorothy to a chair, then took a seat at his desk, and waited with the judicial eye of a man who is about to pronounce sentence. The accused stood. At last Dorothy recovered a little.

"You see, uncle," she began, "it wasn't really anything. I was in Cadet Gillmore's room last night at midnight and —"

"What?" exclaimed the secretary as he arose.

"There, I knew I'd start wrong," said Dorothy, and she wept afresh.

The secretary's face was white now and his hands tightly clenched, but Gillmore's eyes were unflinching.

"Perhaps Mr. Gillmore had better tell the story," said the secretary, almost fiercely.

"No," said Dorothy, as she stood up, suddenly calm. "No, I'll tell it. It was my fault."

Then she told it all—and as she talked the secretary's face gradually softened, and after awhile there was even a faint glimmer of amusement in his eyes.

"I perfectly understand your motive, Mr. Gillmore, he said at the end. "If I can do nothing in this matter you will be court-martialed, of course. Would you, in that case, adhere to the mis-statement of fact you have made?"

"I should, sir, most certainly," was the emphatic response.

"Even if you knew it meant expulsion?"

"Even knowing that."

There was a pause. Dorothy had done

her part and sat looking with strained attention at the two men. The secretary broke the silence.

"You only ask for permission to resign, I believe?"

Cadet Gillmore's face went white.

"That was all, sir," he replied.

"That isn't fair, uncle," Dorothy burst out, passionately. "He should not—"

The secretary smiled—the smile she loved—and crossed to Cadet Gillmore.

"Mr. Gillmore," he said, "I should like to tell you that you have acted as a gentleman should have, and I want to thank you. Your hand, sir."

A flush flamed up in the face of the cadet. He didn't speak because there seemed to be something in his throat, but the hand-pressure was sincere.

"Then, it's all right?" Dorothy asked breathlessly.

"I think it may be arranged," said the secretary.

Then he scolded his pretty niece ever so gently, until she ended it all with a smacking kiss on his lips. Finally he sent some telegrams, dreadfully long, and in that mysterious way known only to men in high positions, disposed of the matter.

"Now, that's all," said the secretary. "I'm busy. Both of you go now."

But it wasn't all at all. Dorothy looked at the cadet and the cadet looked at Dorothy.

"You ask him," she said and she blushed.

"Please, sir," said the cadet. "I should like to ask you if we are married?"

"What?" demanded the secretary. "What?" and again: "What?"

The secretary's hands were tightly clenched

"Yes, uncle," said Dorothy, "there was a ceremony, you know, but we don't know if it took."

"Seems to me you should be the best judges of whether or not you are married," said the secretary. "What is all this, anyway?"

Together they told him the happenings in the little parlor of the Hilliard. He listened attentively.

"Did either of you refuse to marry the other?" he asked.

"No, sir," said Gillmore.

"No, sir," echoed Dorothy.

"Did he pronounce you man and wife?"

"Yes, but we were running away as fast as we could," said Dorothy.

The secretary thought for a long time, and then:

"Well, I'm afraid you are sort of married—that is, I mean — of course — that is, I don't know," he ended helplessly.

"Well, what had we better do?" asked Gillmore anxiously.

"Goodness, I don't know," replied the secretary. "What would you like to be, married or unmarried?"

"Married," said Gillmore promptly.

"What? All sudden like that, without any proposal or anything?" demanded Dorothy.

"It does seem to me rather late for a proposal," said the secretary, dryly, "but if—"

Then he caught a certain happy little look in Dorothy's eyes.

"Say, you young people get out of here; tell my wife about it. Settle it to suit yourselves. I think perhaps—"

Whatever he thought is lost to history. He returned to his work in a daze as

Dorothy and Gillmore went away. Solemnly they discussed the problem at the hotel, because it is a serious thing not to know whether or not you are married. Cadet Gillmore was positive that the ceremony was legal; he was even insistent on this point.

"But I don't feel married a bit," said Dorothy.

"Perhaps this might make the illusion more complete," said Gillmore.

He leaned forward suddenly and kissed her.

"Suppose we get married just to settle the question once for all," he suggested. "This suspense is awful."

"I'm sorry you find it so," said Dorothy icily.

Really, there s no need of going into details. If you had seen Dorothy and the cadet a few minutes later you would have seen her looking at him with amazing love in her eyes, and his arm about her.

VI.

The secretary of war and wife entertained two guests at dinner that evening, these being Dorothy and Cadet Gillmore. Suddenly, in the middle of the dinner, Dorothy caught sight of some one and sat up straight.

"Oh, look there," she exclaimed. "It's Eleanor and Cadet Smythe and the old gentleman with the whiskers. I knew I had seen him; it's Eleanor's father."

After dinner there was a mass meeting.

"Well, what are you doing here?" was the simultaneous query from each side.

"We're married," said Cadet Smythe, proudly. "Yes, we eloped and came on here. Eleanor's father met us and has forgiven us."

He turned to the elderly gentleman.

"Mr. Phillips," he said, "a friend of mine from West Point, Cadet Gillmore. My father-in-law, Gillmore," he explained.

"We've met before," said Gillmore, as he shook hands.

"Yes, frequently," said Mr. Phillips, grimly.

"When?" asked Smythe.

"Oh, he was a witness at one of our weddings," said Gillmore, easily.

"One of your what?" demanded Smythe.

"Our first marriage, wasn't it, my dear?" and Gillmore turned to Dorothy.

"Yes, our first," said Dorothy.

Then the mass meeting explained, each side to the other.

"How were the arrangements?" asked Smythe, quizzically.

"Fine," said Gillmore.

"I'm glad of that," said Smythe. "I fixed it all by wire for Eleanor and myself, but she stopped for a tooth-brush so we missed the train and went to Peekskill."

Over in a corner Mr. Phillips was talking to the secretary of war.

"Bright chap, Smythe," he was saying. "Awfully bright. Fooled me, all right. Sent me off chasing Gillmore and your niece and he and Eleanor went to Peekskill. He'll make a general some day."

Man and Man

BY OLIN L. LYMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY W. H. D. KOERNER

STOLIDLY the committee waited at the foot of the stairs while their spokesman mounted the flight. He knocked upon a door, opened it, and entered.

A minute passed in silence that oppressed even this stoical group. A burly, red-faced fellow with a stubby gray mustache coughed nervously, others shuffled their feet. With a few moments longer of waiting, the suspense abruptly was relieved.

The door above was flung wide violently and somebody shot throught it, reeling to the stairs and pitching headlong down them. Bump-bump-bump, in sickening iteration he went till he lay in an unkempt, bewildered heap at the bottom. Upon the upper landing a man glared down at the committee.

"There's my answer," he shouted hoarsely. Turning abruptly, he entered his office and slammed the door.

Throwing himself into the revolving-chair before his oak desk, he picked up a half-burned cigar and began chewing at it savagely. Huddled in his chair—a gray haired, lowering figure—all was forgotten in that moment save the satisfaction, elementally brutal, of having man-handled an enemy. For was this not an enemy? Yes, and all with him, the thousands of employes for whom he spoke.

Through the mind of Thomas Cunningham flashed in review the scene just closed.

This young foreman, John Denton, had dared to enter the office, manifestly under the influence of liquor—nerved for the encounter with means most natural to his crude kind—and he stood in sullen silence while the manufacturer wheeled in his chair and slowly surveyed him from head to foot. Beneath the scrutiny the visitor fidgeted and shifted his substantial weight from one ponderous foot to the other, saying nothing.

"Well?" coldly asked Cunningham at last.

Then had come, haltingly at first, but gathering force in a storm of words, the story of grievances, the demand for their relief. The "bracers" taken by the chairman to nerve himself to meet this gorgon, lent him a rude and ready eloquence that was likewise indiscreet. In the midst of the verbal torrent the ironmaster's raised hand stayed the speaker.

"That will do," he said in his most arrogant tone, a tone that maddened whoever heard it. "I alone conduct this business. I sent word that I would see but one of you in order that I might have this matter over in the shortest possible time. Good-morning."

What had Denton replied? With the peculiar mental reaction that follows excessive rage, Cunningham could not have told in this moment of review. The employee's actual words were temporarily lost amid the mazes of an inflamed memory. He remembered only that they were insolent and that the speaker had stepped threateningly toward him.

"There's my answer!" he shouted

Then the years of affluence, with their refining influences, had dropped away like withered leaves in the gale of the ironmaster's sudden wrath. Again was he the uncouth collier of his youth, with fists like flails and the hot temper of an irascible child. He leaped from his chair and they met half way and struggled with straining muscles. Then the young giant went reeling from the crushing impact of great fists, and the older one watched him shoot across the landing and down the stairs.

Cunningham rose from his chair and walked to the window, staring gloomily at the huge buildings comprising his plant. They were silent now as so many tombs, sentineled by squalid slag heaps, grimy with the dust of busy years. Today, the dinginess, accentuated by the absence of that redeeming roar and clang which had ceased at six o'clock

on the previous evening, was in the last degree depressing. It penetrated even the calloused skin of Thomas Cunningham and struck through to his grim soul, that soul whose existence so many of his *confrères* denied. Nor was it altogether the sight of kingly Capital, prostrate strangely, that produced a feeling so alien, so forlorn, so odd in the mind of Cunningham. Indeed, it was impossible for him to analyze his mood as yet.

His deep-set, gray eyes noted the little group of the committee, in the center of which staggered the dazed Denton. They were moving away across the grimy court to the gates opening upon Market Street, where the ironmaster could see strikers hurrying toward the advancing group to learn developments. One of the committee turned to shake his fist toward the office. The manufacturer smiled grimly.

Leaving the window, he reseated himself before his desk and thoughtfully surveyed the dingy wall of his office.

For thirty years this office, located in a low story above the shipping-room, had served him. It formed a part of the original plant, and as the establishment grew, the office-quarters grew with it in haphazard, barrack style. Most men in the ironmaster's position had long since built new and more ornate quarters. Not so with Cunningham, who never changed in the matter of securing the most of utility at least expense.

An old clock upon the wall struck twelve. As the last stroke chimed there was a din of whistles, gongs, and sirens from the myriad manufactories of the dingy city—all but Cunningham's. He struck a bell sharply. Spalding, his office-manager, entered from the general department, wherein was audible the sharp clicking of typewriters. Cunningham donned hat and coat and closed his desk while giving Spalding some curt directions concerning routine. Spalding cast an anxious glance out of the window. "Shall I call a cab, Mr. Cunningham?" he asked.

"Why?"

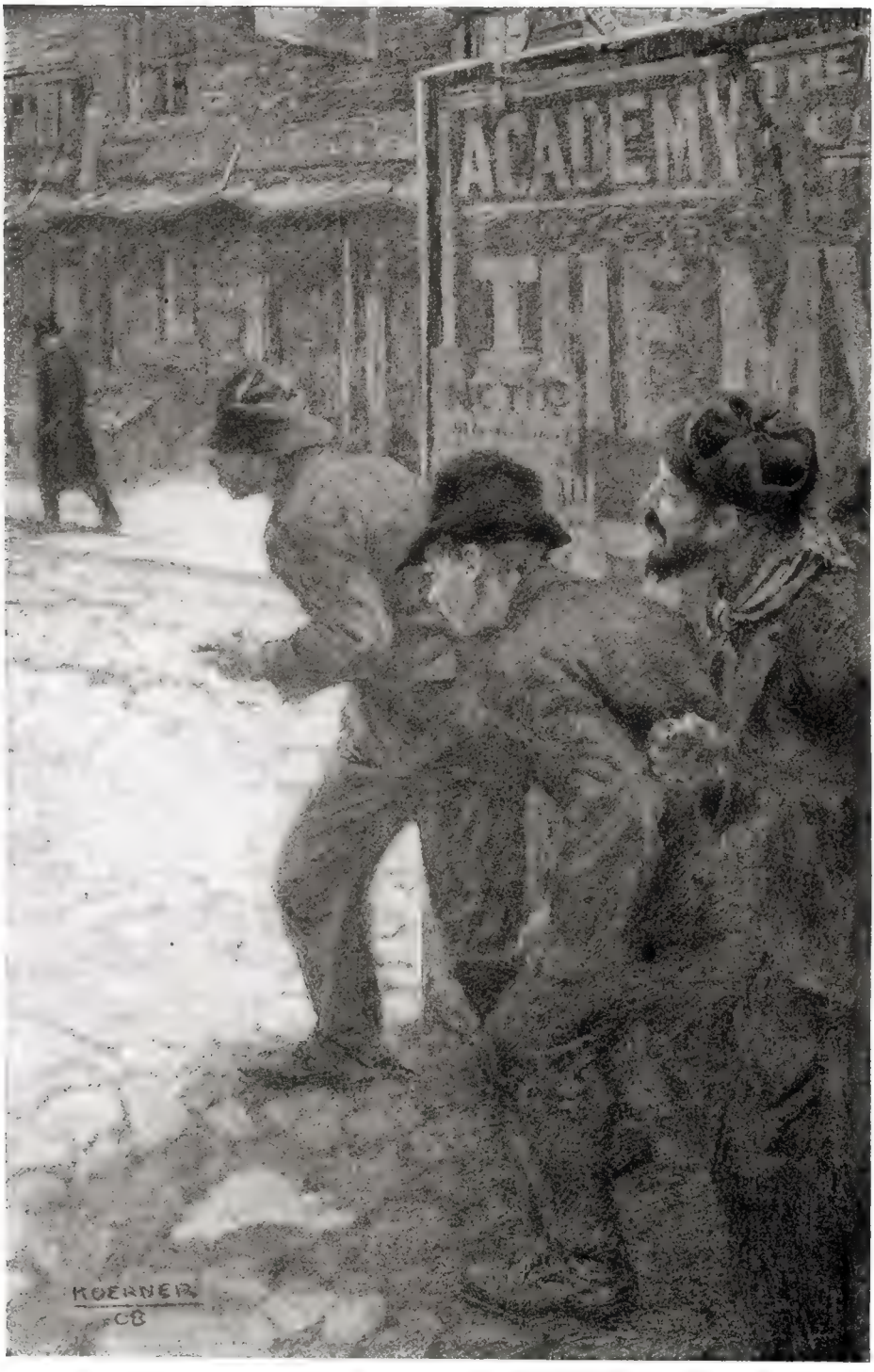
The question was like the crack of a whip. Spalding nervously cleared his throat, bowed, and discreetly withdrew. The ironmaster jammed his derby-hat firmly upon his gray, close-cropped head; his clipped mustache did not conceal lips gripped in a straight line. He went out, slamming the door behind him.

Across the court he marched, past the surly loungers near the gates, and straight into a dense crowd gathered swiftly as a brooding storm. Grim-faced, indomitable, he walked through with never a glance to right or left. Though men stood in his way as he approached, they instinctively moved aside ere being shouldered out of it, only to rage within themselves when he had passed. Towering above them he strode on, while in his wake grew an ever-deepening growl. So he came at last to the Franklin Street corner, where he waited the customary moment for the street-car which took him within a block of his home.

That afternoon Cunningham sat in his library, in which environment was revealed another side of the complex nature of this grim-faced autocrat. The room was the crowning attraction of a dwelling truly palatial. Filled with rarest treasures of the worlds of literature and art, it was in odd contrast to the ironmaster's squalid office down-town. Sordid in the hive which produced the honey, Cunningham was equally lavish in spreading the spoil upon his own bread.

A thought of his earlier years came unbidden to the ironmaster as he sat in his library, a black cigar between his teeth. It was of the hopeless time ere Opportunity came to lead the way to plenty, of days when he was ground between the upper and nether millstones of unsparing toil for indifferent masters. Such was his ambition that he was enabled to work steadily on when hope was gone, such was his brain that it enabled him ultimately to attain his will. Now he was surrounded by the things his soul had craved, and that Thomas Cunningham had a soul all knew whose acquaintance with him was not confined to his hard exterior presented to the business-world .

In him met that rarest of combinations, the highest of business-acumen



These creatures of the night tracked their unsuspecting quarry

with the truest artistic temperament. Through assiduous study in his room o' nights in that early time he had cultivated the first. He had obtained a foothold upon the ladder he had been steadily mounting since, ruthlessly displacing those whose slower progress impeded his own and tumbling them to annihilation. He was of the fittest; he survived.

To what purpose? He made one side of his nature serve the other. In business-hours he ground men's faces, and the minted dust ranked him foremost in the lists of financial reference, despoiled for him the artistic treasure-troves of Europe, vested him with authority among the elect. How long since that early time: That cramped environment, the day's toil for a pitful wage, the days and months and years without hope and barren, seemed, in retrospect, a dreary dream.

What of to-day? What if it were true that, in differing degree, all men were equal in their wistful love of progress, even if such progress meant no more than a few wretched cents per day? True, all men could not scale heights; many there were that would not care for the toil involved in such a climb. Might it not be, however, that even the most unaspiring would appreciate a little more light in shadowed depths? Thomas Cunningham scowled and puffed savagely at his cold cigar.

Violently thrusting aside these disturbing thoughts, the manufacturer mentally reviewed the steps thus far taken in the present crisis.

He had acted before the visit of the committee. He had allowed that body to wait upon him, as he had informed its spokesman, merely for peremptory refusal to deal with his employees. Forty-eight hours before, when he had learned that the men would walk out that night, he had sent messages to trusted agents. He had received satisfactory reports of progress. The first consignment of men to fill the places of the strikers would shortly arrive. Cunningham smiled grimly and arose. Taking hat and stick he left the house for his club.

The ironmaster was of late oddly restless, anxious to leave his dwelling before the coming night and its attendant depression. It had been so since the death of his wife a year before. Previously his club scarcely ever saw him, now it claimed him each evening. He must have nepenthe for the loss, due to the business-distractions of the day, through nightly relaxation away from the scenes of the vanished presence.

Entering his club the manufacturer spoke to a few acquaintances and presently sat down with a cigar and a newspaper. He adjusted his eye-glasses, a recent necessity, and leisurely spread the journal upon his knees. He took one glance, wadded the sheet into a crackling ball and tossed it from him. Under the biggest and blackest of headlines, and accompanied by a horrible caricature of himself, appeared the exaggerated story of his encounter with Denton that morning.

Disgustedly he picked up another paper, a favorite of his, justly noted for its conservatism. For some reason he did not pause to look at the news-columns but turned directly to the editorial page. Rent and twisted by violent hands, the paper followed its predecessor. The "leader" was a scathing denunciation of Cunningham's "unprovoked assault upon an unoffending workman whose only crime lay in his demand for justice in behalf of his mates."

The club's files were spared further mutilation by the departure of the assailed ironmaster in high dudgeon. Singularly enough, perhaps, he had not thought of the morning's episode being exploited in this way. It had seemed the avenging between man and man of an insult, nothing more. Denton had been drinking, of course, but that rendered his offense the less pardonable. What were those terms in the editorial which had offended the ironmaster? "An industrial Czar," "One of the Capital's most insolent overlords." "The living embodiment of the calloused Ego."

Not pleasant reading, to be sure, and the less so because Cunningham, whom most misunderstood, was not calloused at all. No man more secretly sensitive existed: it was a hidden weakness that reached absurdity. So it had been in the

early days; so it was now. The utterance of the newspaper had struck to the quick.

Striding on through the pleasant Autumn-night, under the myriad lights and through the moving crowd, the mind of this man was obsessed by a whirl of disturbed thoughts which rendered him oblivious to surroundings that else must have inevitably distracted. Mechanically he halted with many others at a congested crossing. His own name, spoken by one of a group upon the curb, challenged his wandering attention.

"It was brutal!" the voice hotly proclaimed. "No, I do not mean the assault itself, which may have been provoked. Anyway, I am told the man was not only one of the most powerful in the shops but is fully thirty years younger than Cunningham. That was between man and man. But the spirit of the thing! It belongs to the dark ages, when Might was a cannibal stuffed with murdered human rights.

"These men have real grievances. It costs more to live to-day than ever before in this country. They have not received an advance in wages for ten years. The other shops in this city pay time-and-a-half for over-hours, Cunningham pays his flat rate and it is less than any of the rest. In self-preservation they have tried to unionize; the attempt was stamped out with wholesale dismissals. And finally, when they seek honorable arbitration between man and man, this autocrat refuses to receive them. When they walk out and afterward seek audience with the potentate, the papers have a story, odd, indeed, for this Twentieth century.

"These men, without whose hands Cunningham's brain would be as nothing, come to ask for a modest and needed share in his growing prosperity. Their answer is a succession of bumps down stairs. I am not discussing the merits of the bumps in themselves but I bitterly condemn the animus behind them."

The crowd moved on and Cunningham with it, rather thankfully. The indictment profoundly disturbed him, all the more because it had been pronounced by one whose appearance proclaimed him of the so-called leisure-class, which is to say the hardest-worked. The magnate's ears were opened now. He moved down the brilliantly lighted street, and on all sides he found himself possessed of a sudden galling fame. Universal denunciation was his portion; he began to feel rather lonely.

Occasionally someone favored him with a stare of recognition, but for the most part his identity was screened in this shifting jungle of human faces. Of this he was naturally glad. On he went, and with him, not to be shaken off, marched his escort of bitter reflections.

Again he lived within himself, without eyes or ears for the passing throng. The boasted breadth of view, which he had long prided himself in possessing, was it a dream without substance? Throughout his career he had steadfastly regarded his business as his own. Had this policy indeed ground men to powder in the mortar of his remorseless ambition?

Oblivious to the fact that the throng in the brilliant thoroughfare had given place to scattered knots of the less pretentious in dingy, ill-lighted byways, Cunningham strode on. With bent head and hands thrust in his coat-pockets he passed rows of squalid blocks and dingy tenements, before which lounged unkempt men and an occasional frowsy woman. Once a policeman strode by, touching his helmet in recognition of the millionaire; he swung on without heeding, in definite pursuit of a mechanical purpose.

And always there followed—if Cunningham had known it—a squad that from time to time received reinforcements from low dives and reeking groggeries along the way. Far back on the lighted thoroughfare a quartet of the ironmaster's former employes, inflamed with the drink that, to some natures, is the first solace for worriment, had sighted and followed him. Least desirable of the thousands of differing mould he had employed, the fumes of their libations fanned the hatred in their hearts into devouring flame. As they proceeded, a cautious word here and there brought forth

from the alleys nameless dregs of humanity, denizens of godless slums.

Now the pursuers formed a sodden, vicious Nemesis proceeding in sullen silence, separating with foxes' cunning at sight of a distant policeman, herding in sinister cohesion when he had passed. So these preying creatures of the night, ripe for any riot, tracked their unsuspecting quarry.

How he managed to descend he never knew

A little later the door of Cunningham's office flew open sharply, a man stepped through, and the portal was slammed shut and the spring-lock snapped.

The ironmaster, who had been sitting with his elbows upon his desk and his head upon his hands, sprang to his feet. One dazed, bewildered glance he cast about him, slowly grasping the environment hitherto unperceived in his absorption. Then he turned to the intruder.

The face of the man was indistinguishable in the dim circle of radiance cast by the single-shaded bulb over the magnate's desk. Cunningham reached up and pressed a button. The room was flooded with electric-light.

"Put 'em all out, quick!"

The tone was peremptory, and with strange alacrity the ironmaster obeyed, extinguishing with the rest, his own desk-light, which was on another circuit.

Then he leaped furiously at a conclusion.

"What do you mean?" he snarled. "Why are you here? I threw you out once today!"

"I know you did!" a voice told him grimly. "By rights I oughter let things go, but I can't see a man murdered."

"Murdered!"

The magnate took an incredulous step backward in the darkness.

"That's what I said," replied John Denton sullenly. "There's a gang o' cut-throats outside that follered you here; they're swearin' you'll never leave alive. Four of 'em is drunken bums outer yer own shops, the rest is a lot o' loafers from the dumps yonder. I got wind of it an' hurried ahead of 'em. God help ye if they get ye. They just broke into the store-house lookin' for a rope. There aint no time to lose—"

"Where's the watchman?"

"They just knocked him down an' tied him up. Whatcha doin'?" For he heard Cunningham fumbling in the darkness.

"Looking for the telephone."

"Taint no good. They've cut all the wires."

The manufacturer's voice trembled, but merely with passion.

"Why, man, this is the Twentieth century; we are living in the United States of America! They wont dare—"

"Dare? Now, see here, them cattle is forty to two—an' they think it's one—an' they'll dare anything. There's a lot o' the cheapest whisky there as was ever drunk, an' every drop of it is howlin' for your life, Cunningham. You're too mean to die yet. I'm here to help ye stave it off!"

"Thanks!" The tone was ironical with a mellower under-note of humorous appreciation.

"Hark!"

Denton sharply whispered the word. Both men bent forward listening in strained attention. There was the crunch of footsteps in the graveled court outside, followed by the confused tread of many feet ascending the wooden stairs. There sounded the menacing growl of voices, then silence for an instant while the two men in the office crouched, breathing low.

A knock thundered at the door. "Come out, Cunningham!" ordered a voice that neither of them recognized. "Come out 'nd take yer medicine!"

There was no reply. "We know you're there!" pursued the voice with accompanying oaths. "Come out or we'll break the door in!"

Cunningham heard Denton's whisper in the darkness. "Here! Brace yer foot against this post 'nd push!"

The old building had been reconstructed from time to time in crazy fashion. About two feet behind the door, and at its left was a wooden pillar, one of three running up through the floor from the lower story and serving to support the roof. Cunningham had never seen the need of ripping them out for replacement with modern steel construction. The makeshift formed a present convenience.

The ironmaster hurried to Denton's side and the two, each with a foot braced against the pillar, threw their weight upon the door just as the men outside came with crashing broadside against it. The portal shivered ominously but held intact. Again the living ram crashed against the wood, which cracked under the impact but could not yield with the mighty shoulders of the straining giants within jammed solidly against it.

A volley of curses proclaimed the hoodlums' chargin. One of them suddenly uttered a yell of joy.

"Get somethin' out o' that heap o' steel in the shed!" he bawled. "There's all lengths. Get a short one an' there's leeway enough here to ram it through. Some o' you guard to see he don't get down while we're gone."

They descended the stairs. Cunningham and Denton, breathing heavily, stood upright. "Open that window by your desk," muttered the employe.

"Ah, the fire escape!" returned the employer comprehendingly. "I'd forgotten it."

"Lower! Some of 'em might be listenin'."

They tiptoed to the window. Masses of cloud, driven by a rising wind, obscured the moonlight. Through grace of a transitory rift in the shifting curtain, several figures were revealed loitering at the foot of the stairs. Then darkness settled more heavily than before and the forms of the watchers faded into unreal shadows.

The manufacturer began cautiously to raise the window. Inch by inch climbed the sash until it was sufficiently open to afford an exit. Cunningham lifted his foot to step through, Denton preparing to follow him.

In that instant there was the crash of glass, and something whirled by Cunningham's ear. A sharp pain stung his cheek, followed by a hot trickling of blood. More than this, there was the thud of a falling body behind him. Like a stricken ox, Denton had gone down.

The ironmaster immediately grasped the situation. He had made no noise in raising the window. Some lawless vandal, to gratify a destructive impulse while waiting for his mates, had thrown something that had passed through the window, striking down Denton, while the manufacturer's face was cut by a fragment of the flying glass.

There was no sound from the prostrate man behind him. The manufacturer turned and knelt by Denton's body. Igniting a match, he shaded the flame carefully with his hands and gazed into the foreman's face. The steel-worker was unconscious, his face ghastly, blood ran from a ragged scalp-wound inflicted by the stone that lay on the floor nearby. Cunningham swiftly examined the wound, then sighed with relief, for its effects would evidently be no more serious than his own hurt. Denton was merely stunned.

What next to do? Approaching voices warned him that they were returning with the ram. Cunningham stood upright, drew a great breath, bent, and, with one strain of his mighty arms and back, he swung the dead weight of the unconscious man over his shoulder and staggered to the window.

Gaining it, he looked out into total darkness, for a dense canopy of scurrying clouds now obscured the moon. Tramp, tramp, tramp, up the stairs came the vengeful tread of hurrying feet. One or two voices jeered in drunken triumph, but for the most part the ghouls were mute with silence of sinister presage.

Cunningham thrust the window higher. Hanging desperately to his burden he set one foot upon the low sill, grasped the edge with his free hand and with an upward thrust of his right leg reeled out upon the narrow landing of the fire-escape. How he managed to descend the vertical iron ladder with but one hand to grasp the rungs and with that awful weight pulling him backward and seeking to throw him to the ground, he never knew. But in a moment's time he gained the court and in the darkness, made instinctively for the gates.

In the rear sounded a mighty, splintering thud, the crash of the fallen door. They swarmed into the unlit office, stumbling in the darkness, falling over unseen furniture, bawling one to another for light to disclose their prey.

Out in the night the iron-master pushed stubbornly toward the gates and safety, clinging grimly to his silent burden. Its weight bore the old man down. the blood pounded at his throbbing temples, his eyes seemed starting from his head, and with opened mouth he gasped for breath. At last, when the perspiration streamed from every pore and his massive legs bent weakly under him from this herculean effort, the great egress loomed before him—closed. Cunningham, still laboring for breath, laid his burden down and perfunctorily tried the gates.

They were locked!

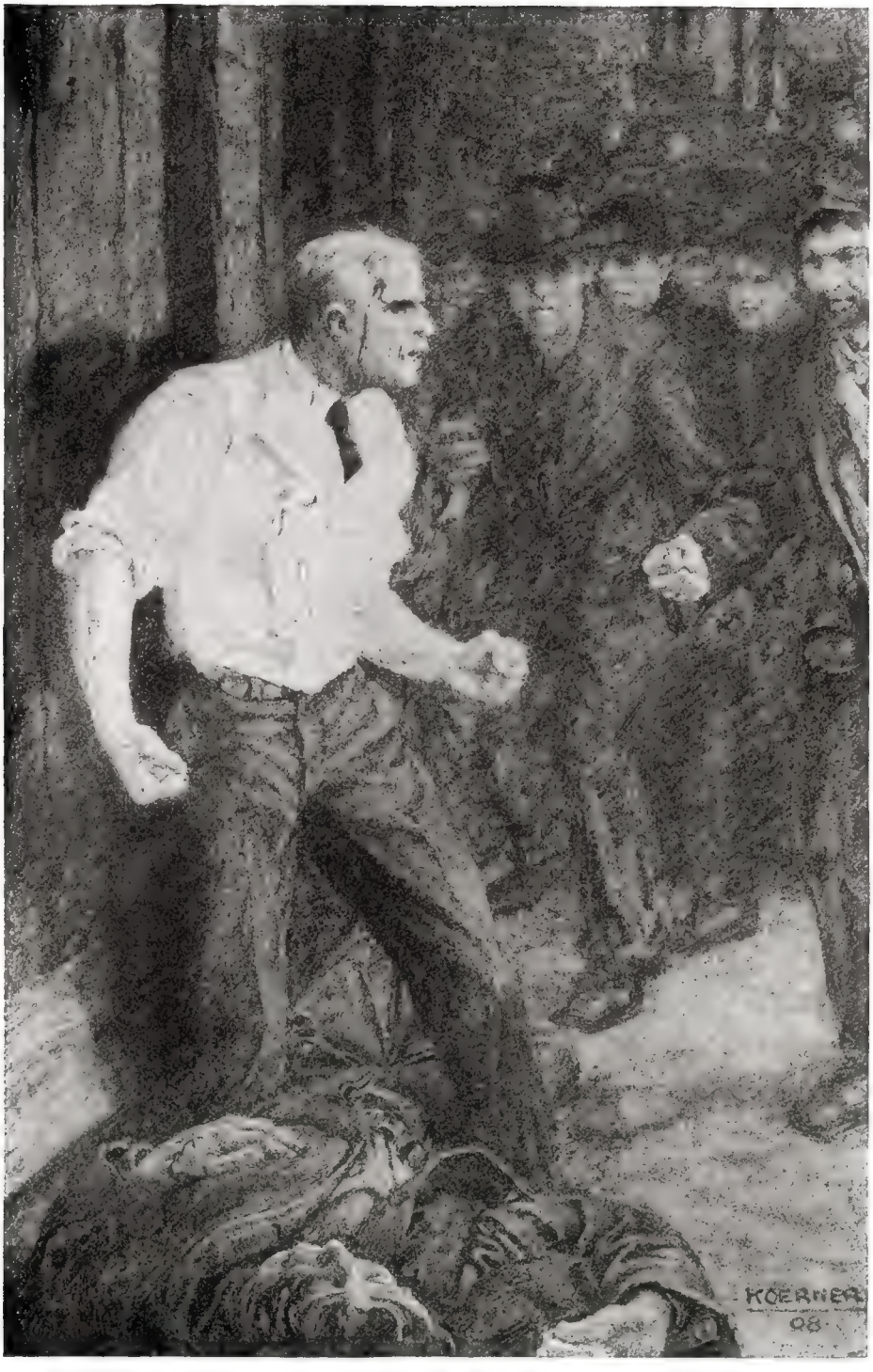
He had been securely trapped, indeed. The explanation was simple. The gates had been open when the ironmaster had entered like a somnambulist something more than an hour before. As his former employes had evinced no inclination toward violence, he had not considered it necessary to close the entrance to the yard. His pursuers, after surprising the watchman, had taken his keys and put at least one of them to excellent use.

Despite its great height, the athletic Cunningham could easily scale the obstruction. The emerging moon lent aid for a calculating glance at the gates, for another at Denton. He still lay unconscious. Light suddenly flared in the office yonder. An instant's silence was followed by howls of baffled rage. Down the stairs they tumbled like a pack of hounds in full cry.

Cunningham bent and dragged the silent man close to the barrier, then stripped off his own coat, thrusting it under Denton's bleeding head, and swiftly rolled up his shirt sleeves. Stepping in front of Denton he waited like an enraged old lion. With blazing eyes, with bloody face grim as the death he defied, he stood full in the light of a moon that now swung in a space swept free of clouds. His hands clenched and the muscles stood out like whipcords upon his great forearms.

Across the court they came, a murderous crew, exultant cries upon their lips, mad with the blood-lust. And at sight of that sanguinary, hatless, coatless figure, indomitable in defiance, with vengeful eyes and face hard as his code, they halted like a pack of snarling curs before a militant mastiff, and stood oddly hesitant.

The lip of the manufacturer lifted from his teeth in a bitter sneer.



Cunningham had been fighting with his back against the gates

"Four of you used to work here, eh?" he growled. "It is light enough now, I know you. The strike was worth while if only to weed out such vermin. What are you waiting for? Aren't there enough of you?"

The shrill cry of one of the quartet of ringleaders made answer. This fellow had caught a glimpse of the man whose prostrate body Cunningham was sheltering, and had sprung forward for a look at his face.

"It's Denton with him, the traitor; he's the foreman in Mill A! I told you there was two. Give him to us, Cunningham, and you come with him!"

"Come and take us!"

The tone had the crack of a whip-lash.

In sudden, wolfish ferocity they came, ravenous, drunken wretches that fought with the fury of rabid dogs, with snarling hate which sought to beat him down, to trample him underfoot, to crush him into the dust and grime beneath their grinding feet. As for him, with massive legs astride his helpless ally and broad back against his gates, his mighty arms launched out like thunderbolts with righteous vengeance in every blow. And for every thump a man went down, while Cunningham's skinned knuckles, long unused to such happiness, welled red, and the great chest rose and fell regularly with intoxicating draughts of God's pure air that was like heady wine for such a splendid fray as this. For always the battle-light flamed from eyes grown young again and the huge fists shot here and there and were crimsoned with spoil most honestly won!

So it went, a battle that was to become a tradition in a wide area, while the wretches staggered and fell, staggered and fell again under the blows of this one man who carried a Nemesis in either hand. And it chanced that neither thugs nor ironmaster, alike absorbed in the business of the moment, heeded the approaching interruption which spelled the end of an affair that else—through force of numbers—must have resulted ill for Cunningham and the helpless man he was protecting.

For the watchman's bonds had been tied in haste, to be unloosed by the victim at leisure. A receptacle in his quarters had yielded a duplicate key to the gates. These he had passed through, thoughtfully relocking them to be sure of the quarry when wanted, and had then run to the nearest telephone.

As explained, Cunningham had been fighting with his back against the gates. Nobody engaged in the *mêlée* heard the clatter outside, the rush of feet, the clicking of the great key in the lock. When the gates swung outward, Cunningham naturally went with them, and with justified surprise found himself reposing upon his stalwart back.

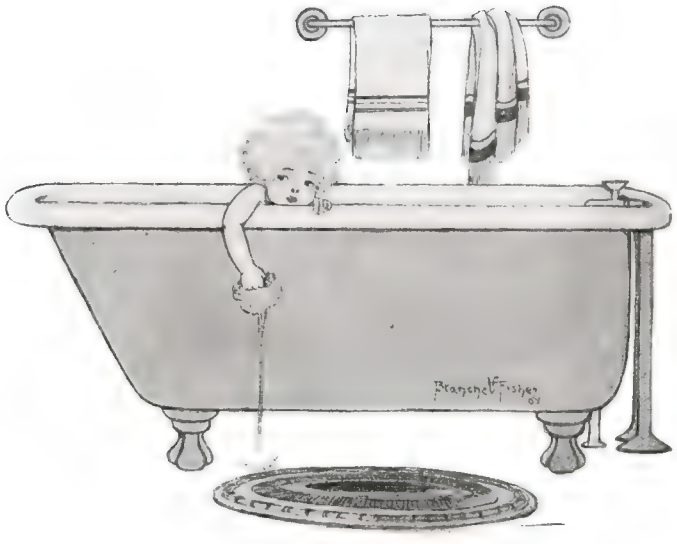
Scrambling from this undignified position to his feet, he positively gasped in amazement. Like trapped hares his late assailants ran aimlessly here and there, veritable clouds of bluecoats in joyous pursuit. Comprehension came, and with it a revival of Cunningham's grim sense of humor. He laughed—a laugh in which there was but little malice.

A little later, amid the clanging of bells upon hurrying patrol-wagons and the shrill cries of a crowd congregating in the moonlight, the revived Denton surlily refused the millionaire's bruised hand.

"I aint sayin' I aint sorry I couldn't do more," he admitted, "an' it was white o' you to stand by after I was hit with the rock. What you done for me, what I tried to do for you, was jest man to man. I aint forgettin' you threw me downstairs when I was tryin', on behalf o' them as has worked faithful for you, to talk with you just that way."

The manufacturer smiled the smile of a man long blind, when God has touched his eyes. His voice was curiously husky.

"You are chairman of that committee. I know what that committee wanted to ask, though I gave you no decent opportunity this morning to ask it. Now, start this word, it will spread fast enough: These shops resume work to-morrow on the new terms—your terms—with the former force—all but four men."



Refining

The Refinement of Alicia

BY MARY L. BRAY

ILLUSTRATED BY BLANCHE V. FISHER

ALICIA was twelve, though at first one might have thought her to be a little older, probably because she had so long assumed responsibility for the conduct and appearance of the younger members of the Murray family that it had become expressed in her face. She was not very pretty, being rather what is described as a sweet-faced child, with quick, intelligent eyes, whose observation nothing escaped, and a bright smile that tempered with friendliness the unconscious sharpness of their scrutiny.

At the present moment her cheeks were flushed with the tense excitement of her determination. All morning she had been working up courage to present a request, working in practical ways, too, in order that she might feel in position to ask a favor.

Her mother was busily occupied with the Fall sewing for her small flock, and this meant that details of the household-work must be temporarily slurred over or accomplished by other hands. Mrs. Murray was, in her way, a painstaking housekeeper; and although she knew the work without her supervision could not be done by anyone else just as she would have done it, she was gratified this morning when Alicia had offered to attend to the marketing, the plain cooking, and the scrubbing of the kitchen-floor, in addition to her usual appointed tasks of bed-making and dusting.

Now the noon-meal was over; the dishes were washed and put away. Alicia looked out of the kitchen-window at the children playing in the yard, thinking that they did not know what she was about to do, for their sake as well as for her own. She hung her damp apron upon a nail underneath the window, drew a deep breath, and walked toward the sitting-room in which her mother was sewing. Alicia now felt that the auspicious moment had arrived.

Mrs. Murray looked up as her eldest

daughter entered the room. She was a testy woman, with a tired face, and hands that showed traces of rough usage. Until the last year, she had borne all the heavy burdens of a very poor man's wife, borne them hopelessly, and not uncomplainingly.

If it had not been for an unexpected bequest from a distant relative, whose death would surely have been a pleasure to himself if he could have realized what a wonderful blessing it brought to at least this one group of beneficiaries, the Murrays would never have been able to leave the crowded tenements of a crowded city for their new suburban home.

All of the inheritance had gone toward its purchase, by full cash payment. When the man and woman found of a sudden that a home for themselves and children was a possibility, they had secured it, as definitely as man can, by buying without indebtedness the best they could buy for the sum they had. It had been fascinating at first to walk from room to room, to look out upon the small grounds, and say to themselves: "This belongs to us. All this is our own." They had almost forgotten, for a few weeks, to disagree.

Alicia stood silently before her mother.

"Well?" said Mrs. Murray.

"Mother," said Alicia, inwardly bracing herself, "can I take a bath this afternoon?"

A slight frown of surprise crossed the woman's forehead. "What's the matter?" she asked. "Did you get yourself dirty scrubbing? I told you to be careful."

"No," said Alicia. "I wore the big apron."

"Then why can't you wait till Saturday?"

"Because," said Alicia, "I want to take a bath every afternoon."

Alicia folded her hands to conceal the fact that they were trembling, although now that the words were out, she felt calmer, and awaited judgment with unflinching eyes.

Her mother put down her sewing and stared.

"What do you mean?" she asked, in a tone of displeasure. "I don't want to hear any more such nonsense."

She turned decisively to her work again.

Tears flashed into Alicia's eyes, and her voice quivered; but the little, pointed chin was obstinate. Having once dared to speak, she dared refuse to be silenced.

"All the children have their bath, mother, every afternoon, after their naps, and then their mothers dress them up in clean clothes and they come out and watch for their fathers to come home, —every single child except us. And, I don't care, I'm ashamed."

"Well, what under the sun!" her mother gasped. "So that's where you got the notion, from those fool children you're out with all day! Well, you can tell them for me that my children aren't so dirty I have to wash them every afternoon. Just tell them that. And here you can sew these buttons on for me."

Alicia took the proffered garment, crying.

"I don't see why we can't be like other children. You'd be ashamed, too, if you were the only girl in the block that wore the same dress all day when every other girl wears a clean one in the evenings."

"I never heard before that you had to wear soiled clothes," her mother answered angrily. "I've worn my fingers to the bone keeping you clean, before your father could afford to pay a washwoman."

"I don't care," Alicia sobbed. "I put on a clean dress on Monday morning and then it's got to last till it's all spotty. It wouldn't take any more clothes to have one dress in the mornings and another in the evenings; and that's what all the other girls have."

Mrs. Murray did not answer. She was running a hem by machine with almost vicious speed.

"Can I, mother?" the little girl asked timidly, after a long wait.

"No, ma'am, I don't think you can," was the cold answer. "I don't need other people to teach me how to bring up my children. You can go right on doing the way you've always done."

Alicia burst into loud and passionate sobs.

"Oh! oh!" she cried. "I think it's the meanest thing! All the girls are noticing

Blanche Fisher
08.
"Mother, can I take a bath this afternoon?"

it and talking about us. They say we're not—r e f i n e d! I'm just ashamed to be seen! I'm never going out again. I sha'n't wait for the children to snub us. We sha'n't play with t h e m! Not one of us, ever—"

Her torrent of desperate resolve was cut short by a vigorous shake by the strong arm of her mother, who was standing over her, flushed with indignant humiliation.

"Who says you're not refined?" she demanded.

"Genevieve and Mary," Alicia answered jerkily. "T h e y were talking about us, and I heard 'em." Her head dropped at the mortifying recollection.

"I say you a r e refined," her mother stated emphatically. "And plenty of the stuck-up l i t t l e t y k e s around here I consider as common as dirt."

"They — take baths — every day."

"I guess they need it. They'd better take t w o baths a day."

"Would y o u m i n d, mother, if I did?" Alicia asked, in a small, pitiful voice. "Just so the children wont laugh at us?"

Mrs. Murray's lips were set in a straight line, and she was a g a i n working very hard.

"I'm ashamed of a child of mine that thinks more of the opinion of good-for-nothing children than of her mother. Take forty baths for all I care. But you'll take them in cold water." She spoke almost vindictively. "I'll have no gas wasted heating water for the bathroom every day. If you want your baths bad enough to take them cold, go ahead. It's nothing to me."

Secretly ill at ease and deeply galled that her children should have been spoken of as "unrefined," Mrs. Murray did not glance at her daughter to see how the ungracious permission was accepted. The thought of having yielded to the pressure of neighborly opinion which she had affected to despise was one that rankled deeply.

Mrs. Murray was not so blind that she had not seen the absence of desire on the part of their neighbors to become acquainted with them, or their polite indifference to her first attempted overtures; and deeply chagrined, she had retired from her efforts until such time as others should seek her out.

"We're as good as they are," she had said to herself, bitterly. "I'll show them. I guess I lived like a lady until I was married."

"I lived like a lady until I was married"

Yet she had an uncomfortable feeling that there was some ground of difference, and occasionally, in a tired way, she wondered if it was because she had lost the ways of her g i r l h o o d since she came from the country to work in the city, a slave in one of the great emporiums of slaves, where she married a fellow-toiler, and, little by little, under pressure of poverty, sank into life amid squalid surroundings.

N o t o n c e had it occurred to her that these people, who chose to maintain such a distance would look down upon her children. I n d e e d, she had thought of snubbing the neighbors by refusing to let her children play with theirs. Hers were as good looking and smart as any of them, and Alicia stood at the head of her class in school. This was a new cut and sharpest of all.

But Alicia's face was a transfiguration of joy. Her eyes sparkled; her nose, reddened by weeping, shone. In gratitude, she flung her arms around her mother's neck and hugged her.

"There—there, don't bother me," her mother said, speaking rather roughly, but gently pushing her away, so that Alicia did not feel repulsed.

She ran out of the room, stopped,

turned back and stood at the door hesitating.

"Mother, dear—what—about—clean—clothes?"

"You can save one dress for evenings, if you want to, for all I care."

"And what—about—underclothes?" Alicia's heart was pounding again.

She fell off the stool

Mrs. Murray slammed the shears down upon the sewing-machine.

"You cannot have any more underclothes! I wont have more than one set in the wash! Don't let me hear another word!"

Alicia fled.

But she was a quick-witted little girl, and this was an occasion for desperate action. Mother had said there were to be no additional underclothes in the weekly washing.

First Alicia paid a visit to the laundry-basket. Then she went out and rounded up her two small sisters and brother, who were playing out-of-doors.

They crept in quietly, and it was not until some time later that Mrs. Murray, missing the usual clamor in the yard, went out to investigate and found it empty of children.

Surprised, she investigated further, until she traced their voices to the bathroom, and opened the door.

It was a small, though sunshiny and pleasant bathroom, and at this moment it seemed full to overflowing. A line had been stretched from the gas-jet to the brass rod of the curtain at the window, and from it dangled, close together, a number of articles of children's wear. One experienced glance told Mrs. Murray that it held about one pair of stockings and three garments to each of her four children.

Ethel, the daughter next to Alicia, mounted upon a small stool before the wash-bowl, was industriously rubbing a last remaining article upon a doll's washboard. At sight of her mother, she lost her balance in excitement and fell off the stool, a flushed, damp and curly heap of little girl.

The children exchanged glances and then expectantly looked at Alicia, who had led them into this situation and might be depended upon to lead them out of any possible resulting complications.

Bravely she addressed their speechless and astonished visitor.

"I'm sorry you came in so soon," she said. "We were going to surprise you."

Mrs. Murray felt vaguely that their efforts could not have been more successful.

"We're all going to clean up every afternoon. There wont be any extra underclothes in the wash, because we've washed our old ones, so this week there wont be any at all. And we'll wash one set ourselves every week, so there'll be two sets."

Mrs. Murray's eye wandered to the line of undergarments, still far from snowy-white, that hung upon the line.

Alicia went on, breathlessly, and with heightened color.

"It's all right, because the ones we'll wear in the mornings wont need starch. We don't care about that. And we don't need any hot water, because we used that new soap. And—"

She paused a single moment for a new point of self-defense.

"And I'm washing the children, and so they wont take cold in the water I just dip them in and rub them hard and dry them quick—Tommy just had his, and he's not a bit cold. Are you, Tommy?"

Alicia buttoned Tommy

Alicia's poignant anxiety as to his reply, for Tommy had submitted to the cold bath only with much repugnance, expressed itself in a side-glance at that youngster, conveying both threat and entreaty. But Tommy,

aged five, came to the scratch manfully:

"I aint a bit cold," he asserted through chattering teeth.

Grimly his mother observed him, blue and shivering. She had not yet thought of what might best be said, and it would have been a troublesome moment for her, had not three-year-old Pearl suddenly burst into a harrowing wail. She had just recovered from the shock of immersion in very cold water, when her mother unexpectedly entered upon the scene, and now was becoming chilled to the point of infant terror. Even Pearl was loyal to Alicia; but she was very young.

"Is that baby in cold water?" Mrs. Murray shrieked, springing to the rescue.

As she saw the little sister snatched from her cleansing grasp, Alicia felt dumbly that all was over and the cause lost. Crestfallen and silent. she buttoned Tommy into his clothes, gratefully donned, finished the laundry-operations of Ethel, whose enthusiasm for the work had utterly vanished, and slipped away.

She was kneeling at the window in her room, looking out upon an unkind world, when her mother's voice recalled her.

The baby's cries had subsided and Mrs. Murray was taking down the line of clothes, with a very queer expression on her face. She had just received one of the most definite impressions of her life.

"Are you—can't we let them dry?" Alicia asked faintly.

"They've got to be washed properly," said her mother. "Why didn't you say you were going to wash the children? You might have killed your little sister —putting her in that ice-water."

Tears came again to Alicia's eyes. She had no more argument.

"If you're going to wash the children," her mother continued, "you've got to heat the water. Don't you ever dare put your little brother and sister in cold water again."

Mrs. Murray walked away, carrying the wet clothes in her arms. Her words had not been especially kind; but Alicia had learned wisdom in the understanding of eyes.

A picture of adoring gratitude, the little girl gazed after her mother for she realized that the first step toward their "refinement" had been taken. There was one thing of which Alicia would no longer have to be ashamed.

Alicia had learned wisdom

After Sixty Summers

BY JAMES RAYMOND PERRY

IN some ways it would be the greatest day in old Timothy's life—old Timothy, whose days on earth had already numbered upwards of thirty thousand! Susan Bellamy had said he might pluck the roses—as many as he wished; and now he was out in the garden gathering them. His old eyes studied each blossom carefully, critically, before the garden shears snipped it from its stem. None but the finest blooms would serve to-day!

Susan was his grand-niece, stout, already past middle age. Old Timothy had come to live with her more than a dozen years before. He was "old" Timothy when he came, for even then he had reached three score and ten.

Phillip, Susan's husband, had yielded grudging consent to let the old man make his home with them.

"Eight dollars a month wont pay for his keep," said Phillip, "but if you're set on havin' him, Susan, I 'spose he c'n come. He prob'ly wont live long, anyway."

But Phillip had slept tranquilly under the sod for six years now, and here was old Timothy smartly snipping off roses in the June sunshine.

The thrifty Phillip had left Susan the little cottage with its garden, a bit of pasture land, and money in the bank. The sum was not so large but that the pension of old Timothy made a welcome addition. A grown son of Susan's John Bellamy, gone to Chicago before Phillip died, was doing well. Out of his earnings he sent his mother a hundred dollars a year in monthly installments, thereby duplicating old Timothy's pension. John playfully called it her pension.

"For," said he, "if anyone is entitled to a pension mother is. No one fights harder battles for his country than the mothers of the land, and when they get old they deserve pensions whether they need them or not."

You see, to John, his mother seemed old—this grand-niece of old Timothy's, who to old Timothy seemed little more than a girl. She was only fifty-one!

So, what with her pension and his, the interest on the undisturbed principal in the bank, the bit of pasture and the cottage with its garden, old Timothy and Susan got on very well and were conscious of but few needs unsupplied.

Susan loved flowers, and this blooming garden was her pride, and of nothing in it was she prouder than the roses. But when old Timothy had told her what he wanted the roses for on this day that in some ways was to be so great, she had cheerfully handed him the garden-shears and told him to cut as many as he liked. And old Timothy was not sparing the rose-bushes this June morning! Great queens of the garden that had held their heads up for the sun to kiss, bent and swayed before him and bowed at last to his demands.

"Ye ought to be proud to be chosen!" old Timothy whispered, as down the garden he went, snipping with the rusty shears. "Ye ought to be proud! Roses never went t' so grand a place as ye are goin'!

"My!" he whispered on, "ye'd 'a' thought she was a rose herself, ef ye'd seen her that day. That day!" he repeated. He stared at the great roses before him, the shears idle, but his thoughts were away back beyond the bloom of sixty Junes. "I dunno how I ever dared to," he whispered, with a little shiver. "'Twa'n't a case o' darin', though; 'twas a case o' have-to. I don't b'lieve any man c'u'd 'a' seen her lips then, with that smile, an' not 'a' done it! I wouldn't 'a' been a man ef I hadn't done it!

"She must 'a' liked me—just a leetle, anyway!" he breathed. "It didn't anger her. She smiled afterwards, with eyes like stars, an' cheeks—Oh, you roses

think, ye've got color! But ye don't know what color is! Ye—ye're just beginners!" he whispered scornfully. "Talk about cheeks like roses! Better talk about roses like cheeks—like her cheeks—when ye want t' praise 'em! Not that they could be. Nothin' c'u'dn't be like her cheeks—that day! An' her hair! I've heered folks talk about hair bein' like sunshine. Mebbe some hair is—common, ord'nary yeller hair! That mebbe it is like sunshine; I dunno. But *her* hair!—I r'member readin' once about a woman 'ith hair like sunshine on *strands o' twisted gold.* That might come nearer t' bein' like hern, but 'twouldn't give ye any reel idea how it looked, either. Nothin' on the earth n'r under the heavens was like it! An' her eyes!

"An' her eyes!" he repeated softly, closing the lids over his own the better to peer back under the skies of sixty Junes. "They talk about eyes bein' ez blue ez the sky." He opened his to gaze up at the glorious blue. "It's something like it!" he whispered, "something like it! Ye c'n seem t' see deeper an' deeper an' deeper into it," he murmured, gazing long. "Only it aint *alive!* an' it don't *smile!* It don't reach in through y'r own eyes an' down into y'r own heart the way her eyes did. The way they did that day! Ther' wuz a chain, so fine ye c'u'dn't see it an' so strong nothin' but herself c'u'd 'a' broke it, that reached from her eyes into mine an' down t' the deepest an' sweetest places o' my heart! An' ef she hadn't broke it herself, an' had so willed it, she c'u'd 'a' led me by that chain t' the farthest ends o' the earth. She c'u'd 'a' led me by it through all the years o' life, an' through all the ages o' eternity, I'd 'a' followed. Ef she hadn't 'a' broke it, I'd 'a' followed!

"But she broke it." It was a whispered sob. "Ef that Boston feller hadn't come up an' made love to her, mebbe!—"

But the thoughts of what might have been and what had been were not things to dwell upon, and he fell to snipping the roses with mild ferocity. His thoughts drifted back, though, into sunnier channels.

"Ye'd 'a' laughed t' seen her!" he told the roses. "She was that roguish—that day! Wimmen ha' f'rgotten how t' smile. Leastways, f'rgotten how to th' way she did—ef they ever knew! Her smile, though, like her hair an' her eyes, was hers. No one else had 'em—anything like 'em! When God made her, he saw he'd done a good job an' was satisfied. He never tried t' do as well again! I guess He knew He c'u'dn't!"

In the rapt old face was no look of irreverence any more than in the devoted old heart was there any thought of it.

"When she smiled," he gossiped on to the wondering flowers, "a dazzle went across her face that hurt y'r eyes 'ith joy! It made ye sort o' dizzy. Ye felt ez ef ye'd have t' gasp f'r breath, 'r else look away! Ye c'u'dn't bear the beauty, ther' wuz so much of it! 'Twuz like a song—her smile wuz!—a song that made ye want t' laugh an' made ye want t' cry, both at once. Sometimes a line 'r two o' po'try makes ye feel the same way—the best kind o' po'try. Only nuther of 'em—song n'r po'try—c'u'd make ye feel it anywher's near's much's her smile did. They'd only just hint at it, an' the smile made ye feel it all through—all the way up an' down y'r soul, till ye fairly ached with the joy o' seein' it! God!"

He paused and stared, with mouth fallen open a little.

Presently he glanced down at the plucked roses. "I guess I got 'bout 'nough now," he said. Still he lingered, squinting carefully at such blooms as were left, lest perchance some more perfect one had been spared that should have fallen.

It was a bunch of truly regal splendor that he finally gathered up and took to the cottage. Susan was out on the porch. After one fleeting spasm of pain at sight of the roses, nodding beautifully on their sure road to ruin, she smiled cheerfully.

"My! my! aint they pretty!" she said. "You c'u'dn't 'a' got such a lovely bouquet any day 'fore this. They're right in the'r prime, now. I wisht we c'u'd 'a' had 'em 's good's that Decoration Day!"

"I'm glad we didn't!" answered old Timothy.

"Why, Uncle Timothy, I thought ye al'ays liked t' have the roses abloom Decoration Day," she said.

"To-day's greater'n any Decoration

Day!" said the old man solemnly. A thought suddenly struck him. "To-day's the Great Decoration Day!" he added in the same solemn tone.

He entered the cottage and Susan heard him open the closet-door in the hall. She peered in through the open doorway, curious to see what he had gone for. He was taking the old army coat off the hook where it hung. Presently he came out with the coat on, and on his head a Grand Army hat with its touch of gold. He was trembling some. He seldom wore these things now except once each year when the bands crashed out their music on the May air, and the sleeping soldiers received their unforgotten wreaths.

He explained nothing. "D' ye think ye c'u'd kind o' tie 'em up, Susan, so 's I wont be droppin' 'em on the road?" he asked.

"Yes; an' I'll wet some o' them ferns an' wrap round 'em," she said. "They'll keep better."

"Oh, you beauties!" she sighed to the roses, as she bound their stems round with the moist fronds. "You're not goin' yet, are ye, Uncle Timothy?" she asked, as the old man reached expectant hands for the flowers. "Ye'll be too early. It's nine miles from Old Middleton, ye know, an' it'll take more'n an hour—nearer two hours f'r 'em to get here. They can't drive fast, ye know."

"I'll go 'long down, I guess," he answered. "I don't want t' have to hurry."

So he took the nodding blossoms, and with hat set straight and his thin old form erect, he marched out into the dusty highway. The roses might have been banners and the bird-songs martial music, so proud and erect was old Timothy as he marched away. Susan watched him, and did not laugh. Officers and men all in one, this little army marching from her door was beyond laughter, on the borderland of tears.

The farmer in the cart coming up the road did not cause old Timothy to unbend any, nor did the farmer's good-natured laugh when they met.

To the "Hullo, Old Tim, out on parade?" he saluted gravely, but made no other answer.

A third of a mile from the cottage the veteran still marched erect, but a little beyond, where a big elm cast an airy shade, weakness seized the old limbs and the straightened shoulders relaxed. He sat down on the grass by the roadside and wiped his brow.

"It's blamed hot for this time o' year!" he spluttered, and with a sudden "Dang ye!" struck at a bluebottle-fly buzzing in front of his nose. But the soft breeze and the stenciled shadow of the leaves composed his temper. There was no need to hurry. From where he sat he could see the blue lake below, aglint in the sunshine, and the gleam of head-stones on the hither shore. With more than half the march completed, here was a pleasant place to rest. He even dozed a little. He knew there was much time. Even as Susan had said, it would take the better part of two hours for them to come over the dusty roads from Old Middleton. His ancient silver-cased watch told him that as yet they could hardly more than have finished singing "Lead Kindly Light." So there was ample time.

When the persistent attentions of the bluebottle-fly made further dozing impossible old Timothy roused alertly and pushed into place a refractory rose.

"Ye hadn't ought to try t' get away," he chided softly. "It's a grand place ye're goin'—a grand place!"

The birds came and sang in the branches over him and he noticed them.

"Ay, sing," he said; "sing y'r little songs."

After a little he fell to crooning some fragments of verse himself. Back there in the cottage well-thumbed volumes of poetry were not lacking. Now it was:

"Ever its torn folds rose and fell,"

And later:

"Two white roses upon his cheeks
And one, just over his heart, blood-red,"

But his voice rose, quavering, when it came to the great battle hymn:

"In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me;
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free!"

He remembered how the men had once sung as they marched into battle. That was the day they had borne him off the field and among the printed lists of the slain his name had appeared.

Many times since he had wondered if *she* had seen it and how she felt when it was supposed he was dead! Middle-aged though he had been when the shot tore through his side, he had builded dreams upon this theme, as youth builds them—and poets. During long weeks in the hospital he had hugged the thought that she might have shed tears for his death. He even dreamed that a letter might come, when she knew he still lived, saying how glad she was. She was married he knew, these many years; but need that prevent her being glad? So he dreamed.

How was he to know she had never even heard he had become a soldier—never knew his life was in peril, much less that he had been reported dead? How was he to know this, and all the rest?—that he had gone utterly out of her life after she married and moved to a distant city? What with social activities, the rearing of children, and the thousand distractions of a busy urban life, she had scarcely thought of him in half a century. How was he to know? He had not seen her face for sixty years.

How was he to know, either, God's goodness to him? Through all those sixty years of wedless life God had given him a shining dream. In the dream had lived an image, forever young, forever beautiful, while the woman who had reared the image for him had passed beyond his vision, treading the painful and corroding paths of time. She had lately come back to her childhood home—and his—in Old Middleton, bearing the weight of eighty years.

Presently his watch told old Timothy he would better be moving on. Somewhere up there on the dusty highway, sedately drawing nearer, were the black horses, and the black hearse with its four black plumes. Refreshed by his rest in the shade he rose and straightened himself, the flowers in front of him at "present — arms!" Then, at the inward command of the gallant soul, he marched off in the hot sunshine along the dusty road.

With a silent "left—wheel!" he turned in between the granite columns of the gateway, and, in fancy stepping to muffled drums, slowly passed on gravel paths towards a lot on which fresh earth had been upthrown. He sat down a little way off, where a cedar cast its shade. A glance at the gaping wound in the ground beside that fresh piled earth had caused the martial spirit in his soul to sink. He stared out on the blue water, but saw it not. This was to be their meeting-place after sixty years—this! In visions long past he had pictured their meeting again; sometimes in one way, sometimes in another; he had never pictured it thus.

Even now he only dimly realized the goodness of God in mercifully drawing a veil between them in this their first meeting of the long afterwards. He should not see her face again, and he vaguely knew that he was glad. The radiant dream that had been given him in his youth and kept undimmed through all these later years, was still secure. It could never be shattered now, or in anywise changed. Ah, that dream! He gazed with eyes that saw not and the vision came again, as it had come so many times before. A form of youth and beauty, immortally young, unchangeably beautiful, looked at him with eyes that seemed like stars and a smile that hinted of heaven! He sat in the grateful shade, the rich June sunshine just beyond, and the glint of silver on the dimpled lake; and with the vision there beside him, leaning closer, exquisite drowsiness came over him. Weary with his unwonted march, the old man slept.

When at length he roused, the place seemed as quiet and deserted as before, but the shadow of the cedar had shifted, and where that gaping wound had been was a mound of fragrant flowers. A little dazed, and comprehending but slowly, old Timothy rose, and lifting the blossoms he had brought, placed them with the others on the mound. Then he toiled back towards the little white cottage on the hill. And with him went a Vision—a vision of youth that would never grow old and would never die!

The Widow Charteris suddenly sat up in bed

The War on The Widow

BY WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

Author of "The Secret Process," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN WARNER

THE Widow Charteris suddenly sat up in bed. She was a light sleeper and she had distinctly heard the heavy footsteps of a man upon the porch below. She shivered. It was very dark, and she was alone in her little eight-room house. Her one maid servant she had discharged to save expense, the instant that the Works had taken on the Munsterberg order three weeks before, for the Widow Charteris was Charteris of the Charteris Chemical Concern.

"What can it be?" she whispered to herself.

The stealthy footsteps still continued. The widow was cold and stiff with fright, but she crept noiselessly to the head of the little stairway, and leaned, crouching, across the balustrade, and listened. A hand was fumbling with the door-knob down below.

The widow found her voice, a strange, half-strangled voice, odd, uncanny.

"Ar-r-rh — oh-h-h!" she screamed aloud.

But no one heard her. She hardly heard herself. For at the same instant that she screamed, the door-bell in the hall clanged with unaccustomed fury.

The warmth came back into her body. She assured herself that midnight marauders didn't break in by means of door-bells. She crept down, still in her night-gown, still in the dark, and stood just behind the door and peered out upon the porch. Yes, there was a man, all right; a big, bulky man, who stood with his hand at his throat, bowing to and fro as he gasped apparently for breath.

"Missus Charteris, Missus Charteris," this man kept whispering, each whisper intended unquestionably for a yell.

Cautiously, obeying some instinct, the widow opened the door an inch—two inches, three—still holding to the protection of the chain.

"Why," she exclaimed aloud, "it's Barney. Barney, is it you?"

And then another sudden panic seized her. Barney was the night-watchman at the works. He had come to report—what? Fire, flood, or dire explosion at the factory—she knew not what.

"Barney," she cried aloud to him, thrusting her head without.

"You're wanted at the works," wheezed Barney. "Wait till I gets me breath. I run—run—all the livelong way—"

He leaned against the portal, panting.

"Devils!" he cried at length. "Devils in red shirts! Fifty—if there's one—fifty devils in red shirts—an' doin' what?"

He waved his hand to indicate that breath was momentarily denied him.

"What?" insisted the widow, stretching forth a white-clad arm, and seizing his. "Devils—doing what?"

"Layin' tracks," said Barney, "layin' tracks," his voice sank into solemnity, "across the right of way."

"The Right of Way!"

The widow knew exactly what he meant.

The right of way was the one thing that linked the Works with the river and placed her product in touch with commerce. The right of way was a wagon-road extending from the factory of the Charteris Chemical Concern on the meadows to the rickety wharf of the Hackensack Transportation Company on the river. It was hers, that right of way. Money couldn't buy it. Its value might be measured in life-blood, but not in coin.

"Barney," she exclaimed, "go down to the cellar-door. I'll let you in. We'll get out the tricycle. We'll go down to the works."

In five minutes she had dressed, Barney wrestled with the bulky, spidery machine until he had it out upon the roadway, and in another instant the widow had leaped upon the front seat, while Barney clung behind; the machine, popping like some giant corn-roaster, leaped into the air, came down on three wheels, and whizzed off into the night

It was not until they bumped on to the corduroy of the plank road on the meadows that the widow realized they had hit up a thirty-five mile gait on the way. She sobered down now, for the planks knocked the breath out of her in one instant and out of Barney the next. She could see the works distinctly. A glare of light illumined it from top to bottom.

"B-b-b-barney," she exclaimed, "is that their light?"

"S-s-s-sure," replied Barney, bobbing up and down, "them devils in red shirts."

With a swerve the widow swung to the right and into the road that led to the factory.

"Now you can see 'em—them red devils," Barney told her, leaning over her shoulder and pointing on ahead.

"Ah," returned the widow, clicking her teeth. "I see 'em, and I hear 'em—and I'm going to feel 'em next."

She was as good as her word. She reached the factory and passed it, swung noiselessly into the right of way, and tossed the high gear into fifty miles an hour, for the right of way was hers, to speed on as she liked.

They saw her coming, though she gave no signal.

"Ki-yi," screamed the startled little devils in red shirts, scrambling to the roadside.

She missed the last little devil by half an inch. She shut off her power, drove on until the machine had simmered down, and then came swiftly back.

"Who's doing this?" she yelled.

A tall, thin individual with a slouch hat, stepped out from the construction gang, holding a ball of cord and a surveyor's-rod.

"I'm doing this," he answered, with a nod.

The widow turned and surveyed the job. Three calcium lights had turned midnight into day. One hundred feet of track had been laid—just one hundred and no more. It paralleled the river, running north and south. Its southern extremity was within five feet of the right of way.

"Confound the woman," said the foreman to himself, "in another hour or so we'd have been across."

"Who are you doing it for?" persisted the Widow Charteris.

The foreman passed over his credentials. "Interstate & Tri-State, a three-mile spur, to connect the main freight with the branch freight." He stretched forth his arm. "Main freight's there on the north; branch freight on the south. I got my orders. That's all I know."

"Why do you start here at this particular place—the right of way?" she asked.

A tall, thin individual stepped forth from the construction-gang

The man grinned. "It's a good place to start, I guess," he answered.

The fifty little devils in red shirts set up a roar of laughter. They knew—every one of them; the gang was "on."

"It's a better place to stop," the widow said decisively, "and if you don't stop—"

"Well," said the foreman, "if we don't, what then?"

The widow turned her back and faced the Works. Her eyes filled with tears of vexation. She knew why they had started at the right of way.

It was the only spot on the meadows that they couldn't buy. Once they had crossed it, the rest was easy sailing. And she knew instinctively what would happen. Day and night, night and day, freight-trains, drill-engines, flat-cars would dawdle across the wagon-road, would anchor there for hours at a time; or wanting that, would descend suddenly upon teams, frightening horses, killing horses, breaking wagons. She knew. She had seen this sort of thing before.

"Just now, too," she told herself, "when I've got to use that road every minute of the time; just when I've got the Munsterberg order on—when—"

She turned back to the gaunt and grinning foreman of the gang, and let him see her tears.

"I—I'll k i l l you if you cross that right of way," she yelled.

The Munsterberg contract was the crowning effort of ten years of toil. It was a war-contract for dynamite, gun-cotton, and nitro-glycerine. To secure it, to swing it successfully, meant fame and fortune. It meant that the Charteris Chemical Concern would be known, not only in Berlin, but in China, in Russia, in Japan. But for the present, it meant figuring of the closest kind.

"I'll sell my—my home—to make it go," the widow had told herself.

She had sold a good many things to make it go; she had stinted, starved herself. And freights—that is where the right of way came in.

The instant she had secured the Munsterberg contract, the Interstate & Tri-State had discriminated against her, had raised its rates. To little purpose though, for she had fallen back upon the good old right of way, and upon the good old, cheap old, Hackensack steamboat-line. All day and every day one set of teams was at work upon the right of way bringing in supplies, another set of teams kept the wagon-road hot and dusty with the finished product labeled "Munsterberg & Co. Berlin, Germany, Dynamite. Danger."

The Widow Charteris had held her own. She had done much better than ever Charteris had done. Charteris, dead these ten years, had run the Charteris Concern into the ground. He was a dreamer, was Charteris. He had no time to pick up dollars; he was too busy reaching after millions.

"Railroad!"

That had been the cry of Charteris. He had wanted to own one, to run one. His ideal was a shore front railroad to run from Newark Bay to Paterson, picking up the business of every factory along the water-front—a fast freight. He was before his time. In his day the water-front could take care of itself without aid from high-priced railroad transportation. He had been a dreamer. Yet in a measure, what he had tried to do, the Interstate & Tri-State now was doing. But it was doing what Charteris never could have done; forcing trade by coercion. So Charteris had tossed his dreams and his fancy railroad-shares into a corner years before, and had turned his face to the wall and died, a broken man.

"I was a good chemist, Millie," he admitted at the last. "I ought to have stuck to my retorts."

The Widow Charteris, however, had stuck to them for him, and out of his ashes she rebuilt the Charteris Chemical Concern. And now, she, dreaming, too, but in her own line, was grappling with something almost too strong and too huge for her—the big Munsterberg order. A fly upon the scales might turn her fortune, so evenly were her chances balanced. And the Interstate & Tri-State, blocking her right of way, was something more than a fly. It assumed, suddenly, the proportions of an elephant.

"I'll k i l l you," she exclaimed again, "if you cross my right of way."

She didn't kill him, and he knew she wouldn't, and, with his fifty devils in red shirts, he went on calmly crossing the right of way.

The widow left Barney to do the swearing for her, mounted her motor-tricycle once more, and sped back into town. Dawn was breaking and the mosquitoes out upon the plank road bit into her, but she never noticed them.

She drew up before Westervelt's house at five o'clock.

Westervelt was a counselor at law, and the attorney for the Charteris Chemical Concern. She routed Westervelt out, drove him down to his law-office, and took his dictation on the typewriter. For three hours he dictated and she wrote, steadily.

"Now for the tricycle and V. C. Satterthwaite," said Westervelt yawning generously.

They found Satterthwaite, vice-chancellor, at breakfast. He saw them and found out what they wanted.

"The court of chancery is always open," he conceded gracefully.

By nine o'clock that morning one order to show cause, with a restraining clause within it, had been served upon Parlamon, the president of the Inter-

State & Tri-State; and another copy upon the gaunt and grinning foreman of the gang.

"All right," said the grinning foreman of the gang. "Now that we've got the tracks across the right of way, we'll stop, with pleasure, ma'm."

They stopped.

It was good to the Widow Charteris to see how severely, under the iron hand of Chancery, the Interstate & Tri-State left its work alone. Not a spike was driven after the service of the order. But the foreman had spoken truth. The tracks were, unquestionably, uncompromisingly, across the right of way.

Parlamon, the president of the Interstate & Tri-State, sent for Cowen, of Cowen, Covington & Black.

"Cowen," he said, "this is most particular. We've simply got to have those tracks across that right of way."

"If you've got to, you've got to," said Cowen, attorney for the road. "Let's see about it. You couldn't get permission. Why don't you condemn?"

"Never," returned Parlamon, the president. "If we condemn, the court will compel us to go under the right of way or go over it. You know what that means out there on the meadows—in fill or cut. No. Listen! Here's the trick.

"That right of way of Charteris is the only wagon-road through the muck for miles around. There are dozens of factories down there, Cowen, dozens. And they're all paying the Widow Charteris for leave to use that wagon-road down to the dock. Hence, the boat-company gets that trade. We ought to get it. We've got to have it. We're going to have it, too. To do it, we've got to kill that right of way, and there's nothing like drill-engines and freight-cars to do it. We know a thing or two.

"Cowen," he leaned far over and touched the lawyer on the knee, "there's another private proposition that even my road doesn't know about. You've heard of the Charteris Chemical Concern. All right. Two miles to the south of it is the Sparrowbush Company, manufacturing chemists. Understand? Well, the Sparrowbush Company, manufacturing chemists, was the next lowest bidder on the big Munsterberg dynamite-contract that the town went crazy over. Understand?"

"How do you know?" asked Cowen, interestedly.

Parlamon laughed. "Because," he whispered, "the Sparrowbush Company, manufacturing chemists, is—me."

"No!" returned the counselor-at-law. "Even I didn't know that."

"If," went on Parlamon, "the Widow Charteris can't swing the Munsterberg—though, by George, she's holding up her end—if she can't, I'll get the finishing up of that big job, this year, next year, every year." He drew back in his chair. "I want to tell you," he concluded, "a whole lot depends upon clogging up that right of way."

"I guess we'll clog it up all right—for three years, anyhow," said Cowen, lighting a cigar.

The restraining-order, in the order to show cause, had been merely effective in the meantime, until argument might be heard. The hearing on the order was set for the 13th at chancery-chambers in the Lawyers Building.

"Let us hear from you, counselor," said the vice-chancellor to Westervelt, at the opening of court that day.

The vice-chancellor heard from Westervelt.

For two whole hours Westervelt, the advocate of outraged property-rights, the protector, of an otherwise unprotected widow, raged and stormed, in his wonderfully effective way, against the outrage perpetrated in the dead of night. The vice-chancellor took note of everything that Westervelt had to say. Cowen for the defense, watched the vice-chancellor with care.

"Well, counselor," finally exclaimed the jurist, "it's your turn now."

Cowen rose, and buttoned tight his coat about him. Parlamon, president of the Interstate, sitting beside him gripped the table top with both hands. Parlamon was always miserable when he wasn't sure.

"If your honor, please," said Cowen, suavely, bowing in the direction of his opponent, Westervelt, "the Interstate &

Tri-State Railroad Company rises to concede that the complainant is wholly right, and the defendant is wholly wrong. Since the order to show cause was served upon the president, Mr. Parlamon, who sits at my elbow, and since I have been consulted in the matter, the Interstate & Tri-State, whatever its convictions before that time, has now become convinced that it has no right to lay this track across this right of way. Mistakes will happen in the best regulated railroads. We have made a mistake for which we shall have to suffer costs."

He sat down. The vice-chancellor's face softened with surprise and gratification.

"Well," exclaimed the jurist, "do you back down?"

"We back down," conceded Cowen, "and we are taking up our tracks."

"Well," said the vice-chancellor, still astonished, "Mr. Westervelt, that ends it, so it seems to me."

"It looks to me that way, your honor," he admitted dubiously.

Cowen rose and buttoned his coat about him

"Take up your tracks, then, counselor," went on the vice-chancellor, "and," he said to Westervelt, "then you can enter an order discontinuing the suit. Is that all right?"

It was—to everyone save Parlamon. His face turned white, then red. Twice he started to rise, as if to address himself to the court, and twice sat down under the gentle pressure of the hand of Cowen.

Cowen stalked back to his office, with Parlamon, indignant and profane, trailing on behind him. Once in his private room Cowen sank amiably into a chair, lit a cigar, and handed one to Parlamon.

Parlamon brushed it aside.

"What do you mean," asked Parlamon, glowering, "by giving away my case like that?"

He tapped the bundle of papers that lay upon the desk.

"Didn't we take all those affidavits just to defend this suit?" he asked.

Cowen smoked his cigar.

"Sit down, Mr. Parlamon," he said.

"I wont sit down," said Parlamon.

"Sit down, Mr. Parlamon," said Cowen, suavely if a little commandingly, and Parlamon finally sat down.

"Parlamon," conceded Cowen, "we did take all these affidavits to defend this suit. We did go into court to knock out this injunction. But you didn't see what I saw: that Satterthwaite was going to grant this preliminary injunction. I knew he'd grant it. I knew that he'd compel the removal of this track to-day." He rose to his feet. "If he had, Parlamon," he thundered, "never, never, never would you have been able to lay that track a second time." He sat down again. "Instead, what have you got? You've come out of court, without a shred of paper against you, with nothing but a promise to take up your track."

"We've got to keep it," growled Parlamon.

"Of course we'll keep it," answered Cowen; "that track comes up.

"Parlamon," he went on, "you made a mistake. You don't understand our courts. If you had built four miles of railroad instead of just a hundred feet, and built it all at once, the court never

would have interfered with you on a preliminary injunction. Do you see? It doesn't rip up tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands just on affidavits. Not by a long shot. You thought you were smart. You laid your track across the hardest spot first, and it only cost you hundreds. But if you'd spent a hundred thousand, or fifty or twenty-five, the case would have gone on to a trial, with witnesses, and you know as well as I, what a trial involves.

"It means that it goes on the regular chancery calendar, which is a year behindhand. It would mean an appeal, another year; another appeal, another year. And there you are. Meantime, your fifty thousand dollars worth of track stays down; your drill-engines and your freight-cars clog the right of way, the Charteris Chemical Concern wrestles with the Munsterberg contract, loses it. Things come your way. You see?"

"Why didn't you make a fight, then?" growled Parlamon. "I don't see what good it does us to cave in. We can't go and build that road again, even if we try to do it all at once, as you say. If we built that road again, we'd be guilty of contempt of court. I know. I had it in the Haggerty case. We're not under injunction, but we've fooled the court, and the court wouldn't stand for it. Don't I know?"

"Of course you can't build that road again, or lay those tracks again," smiled Cowen. "But there's nothing to prevent somebody else doing it, is there?"

Parlamon was puzzled. "Somebody else?" he queried.

"Sure," returned the lawyer. "Suppose some of these old fizzled out roads —wild-cat schemes that haven't a dollar to pay fines—holding some bum old franchise—suppose one of them should take it in its head a month from now, to slap down tracks? There's no injunction on anybody. And fraud? Who in thunder can talk fraud? You've got to prove fraud, haven't you? Keep your hands off. Let somebody else build the tracks. You see?"

A broad grin overspread the face of Parlamon.

"By George, Cowen," he exclaimed, "you're a wonder. After that, I'll smoke all the cigars you can pass out to me, by George."

"The shore freight-trade and the Munsterberg contract are already yours," commented Cowen, in conclusion.

The Widow Charteris watched the tracks taken up, watched her big trucks roll to and fro in ceaseless procession on the right of way, and watched the Munsterberg contract. She shivered as she did so. She sold her tricycle; she sold her jewels, her silver; she sold her house.

"I've got to swing that contract," she assured herself.

But she knew that she couldn't do it; knew at the last, that it was an elephant on her hands; that it was too big for her to handle. Knew, at the last, the Charteris Chemical Concern would go down into the obscurity that was reserved for business-houses marked with Unsuccess. Night after night she sat in her little room in her boarding-house, wide-eyed and sleepless, contemplating ruin.

"If I had seven thousand dollars more," she wailed.

But she didn't have it, and she couldn't get it. And on Saturday afternoon of that week, after working-hours, she dropped into a discouraged sleep. She was glad the next day was Sunday and the day after that was Labor Day. It would give her rest—rest—rest.

On Tuesday morning she reached the Works at ten o'clock. She rubbed her eyes.

"Why—why," she exclaimed, "what is this?"

If she hadn't taken a big chance, and discharged Barney to save money, she would have known of this on Saturday afternoon. But now, it was too late. For, from far to the south of her to far to the north, there stretched four rails, a double track, between the works and the shore, across the right of way, and across the right of way, upon each track, there stood a drill-engine and a freight-car, idly shunting to and fro? She wailed, and wailing, rushed out of her private office, and hailed a man in the cab.

"Who did this?" she exclaimed.

"I must decline, Mrs. Charteris, to discuss this matter any further"

"What?" he asked.

"This," she persisted, pointing to the encroaching, and offensive rails.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Don't know, ma'm," he answered. "I'm new with the road this morning."

"What road?" she queried. "The Interstate & Tri-State?"

He shook his head. He pointed to the freight-car that trailed behind him.

"The name's on her," he answered.

It was—and it was on his cap, and upon the engine, and upon each car.

"The Shore Front Railroad," she exclaimed.

In despair she looked up the track and down the track. She knew what it meant. Westervelt had told her what it would mean if they ever could accomplish it. They had accomplished it all right. No doubt about that.

The widow went slowly back to her office and sat down upon an old trunk and wept as if her heart would break. This was the last straw. The name of the Charteris Chemical Concern in another month would be dragging in the meadow mud. Through her tears she could see her big teams lined up on both sides of the drill-engines, waiting, as they had waited now for an hour, to get across. On the right-hand side was mud; on the left-hand side was water.

"The Shore Front Railroad," exclaimed the Widow Charteris, wildly, in her solitude. "I'll k i l l the Shore Front Railroad."

She didn't start just then. Instead, she straightened up and glanced once more out of the window. "The Shore Front Railroad!" she exclaimed, uncertainly. "I s it the Shore Front Railroad?"

It was. The cars and the engine bore witness to it.

In another instant the Widow had pulled open the door of her safe and had scattered its papers out upon the floor. Abandoning the safe, she tore open the old trunk. And at its very bottom—

"Ah!" exclaimed the Widow Charteris, softly to herself, with a deep sigh of satisfaction. "The Shore Front Railroad. Here it is."

At two o'clock that day President Parlamon, of the Interstate & Tri-State Railroad Company, received a visitor he had confidently expected. It was the Widow Charteris. He shook his head.

"Now, madam," he protested, "I've heard quite enough from you over the telephone. "I have no more to say. The Tri-State did not build those tracks. The Tri-State had nothing to do with those tracks. I did not build them."

And all of that was literally true. The emperor of expert-accountants could not have traced the connection between Parlamon and the laying of the tracks.

"I must decline, Mrs. Charteris," went on Parlamon, "to discuss this matter any further. If you think you have a remedy, it is against the Shore Front Railroad Company, and in a court of law, not here."

He swung about in his chair.

"I—I didn't come to complain," sniffled the Widow Charteris, "not to complain. I simply came to see if the Tri-State didn't want to buy—I wanted to see if you didn't want to buy—the Shore Front Railroad."

"Buy—what?" he echoed, swinging back again.

"The Shore Front Railroad," she persisted, hesitating. "It isn't much of a road. It only owns four miles of double track, and a couple of engines and a few freight cars. Somebody built the four miles of track for it within the last two days, so it can't be very good track, and somebody gave it the engines, and the cars, so they can't be very good. But there it is, and I offer it for sale."

"You offer it for sale?" echoed Parlamon.

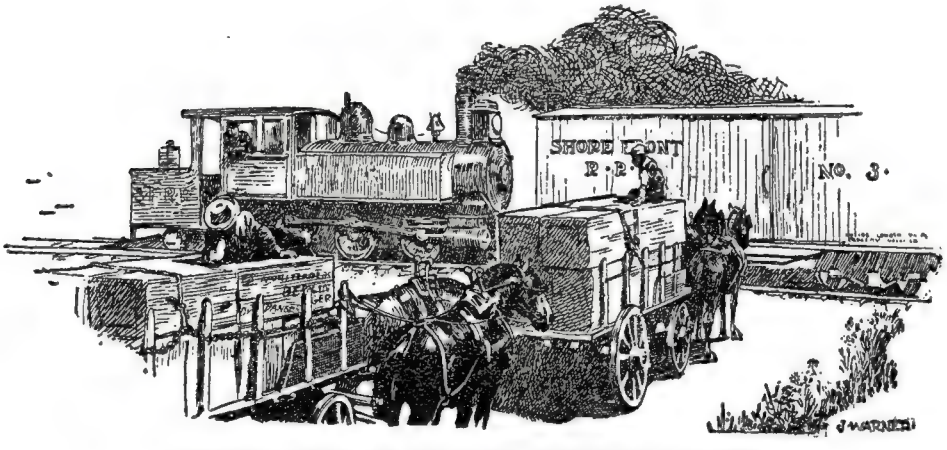
"Yes," she said sadly. "You see, Mr. Charteris, my husband, went broke on it, and owned nearly the majority of the stock. Yes. I found his stock in an old trunk, and picked up enough more around town this morning to make up the control, with a little to spare. And so, you see, the road's for sale, by me.

"I'll wait here till you get over it, Mr. Parlamon," she added, for she feared that Parlamon was about to throw a fit.

Three days later Parlamon made his offer. It was well up in the five figures—it had to be if he wanted to use that track.

"I think," said the widow, "if we can arrange about a tunnel—at your expense—for the right of way, and about the freight-rates for, well, say thirty years, and if the offer's cash, and—yes, I think I'll let it go. The tracks are beastly, and the cars are rotten, Mr. Parlamon. The Shore Front is yours."

It was, but the Munsterberg contract wasn't, and never will be, it appears. For the Charteris Chemical Concern has just signed for the third time, with Munsterberg, Berlin. The Widow Charteris makes battle, murder, sudden death, for all the world.



The Widow Charteris makes battle, murder, sudden death for all the world

The Armor-Bearer

BY EMMA LEE WALTON

Author of "Deceivers Ever," etc.

AS Simpson turned into the long hall leading to the president's room—the private office with the mahogany and the brass rails — he narrowly escaped running into Harris, the assistant teller, and stopped to satisfy his curiosity and a desire for a chat. There was a serious expression on the teller's face that Simpson had never seen there before, and he wondered instantly, with the habit of years, what was wrong with the bank.

"I'm waiting for the Old Man," the boyish teller answered his look. "Foster is very low; can't live a week."

Simpson almost wanted to laugh, the relief was so great. In the little minute, he had thought of so many of the things he was always dreading, the things that might come to his bank as to others, that the accustomed furrow between his eyes lightened a little and he smiled.

"Foster is a very old man," he said indulgently. "It can't be unexpected."

"I am a neighbor of his," Harris said impatiently, "and I can't consider him so impersonally."

There was something of scorn in his tone, for he had scant patience with Simpson's arrogance, and much love for his neighbor. Simpson had always regarded people as a mass, he as individuals; the difference in their ideals was world-wide.

"I've always wondered why the Old Man kept Foster on so long," Simpson went on. "Any other institution would have turned him out years ago. He wouldn't have stayed a week if I had had any vote in the matter."

"Exactly as they'll turn you out some day."

"Oh, I don't intend to remain a bookkeeper," Simpson laughed easily. "My job leads to something. Foster was in a hole, that's all. When a man's a country bookkeeper he's never anything else if he lives to be a hundred."

"Foster was always accurate," the teller said stoutly. "He drew a high salary and had an assistant."

"Just because the Old Man favored him. He couldn't do anything else, that's all. He was slow and pokey and never made a success of the other things they tried him at. The Old Man gave him lots of chances, you know."

"The Old Man was always more disappointed than Foster when he failed at being brilliant," the teller said. "There was something terribly pathetic about Foster's smile, though, when he came back to his cage each time. He used to say it was because he was homesick or couldn't stand high altitudes."

"The Old Man was foolish to try it," Simpson said sharply. "There oughtn't to be any partiality in an institution like this."

"You make me think of an insane-asylum or a poor-house, calling us an 'institution,'" the teller snapped. "The Old Man and Foster were in a country-bank together nearly forty years ago, so, of course, he favored him. He sent for him when he was made president here, as you very well know. Anybody but you would have—"

"You needn't get excited. An insti—a bank ought to get rid of all its old timber and not allow it to clog the machinery and block promotion."

"Much blocking Foster ever did! When you get to be my boss I hope I'll be dead, if those are your sentiments."

"There comes the Old Man," Simpson said, sliding off the radiator where he had perched. "Gee! doesn't he have it easy, though! I'm going back to my desk and the demnition grind. You see if he isn't actually delighted to be rid of an

incumbrance that never amounted to a row of pins."

"I don't know what the Old Man will do," the teller said wistfully. "I only wish I had noticed Foster a little more, myself, before it was too late."

There was little in the cheery room where Foster lay, to indicate a crisis. They had moved his bed near the window, where the breeze could reach him, and he lay gazing alternately at the sky and at the little old lady who sat by him, smiling over her mending as her glance met his. His brain was very clear, for he was not suffering, and he noted with grim humor that she was darning his socks.

"I don't mind it a bit, now, Martha," he said slowly. "Somehow I'm tired and right glad to rest. The bed feels so good to my old bones."

"Yes, but you mustn't talk," she said hastily. "The nurse told me not to let you when she went for her nap."

"Why shouldn't I talk? I want to tell you things. I'm glad I've laid up enough so you wont have to go to live with Paul. You can keep the house and stay right along here. Mattie'll come and stay with you if you're lonesome—I wish I could see the tuberoses blossom this year. Send some to Harris, wont you? He's been good to me lately."

"Everybody's been so kind."

"Yes," he said regretfully. "I wish I were leaving something behind to make me feel I'd done something for some one of them. Somehow I got in a hole and stayed there, and I was never worth anything more than a fair salary, a 'Good-morning' and a 'Good-night.' "

"There's Paul," she said loyally. "He's your son."

"Yes, but a very stupid man may have a good son. All he has he gets from your side anyhow, and he's a bright man."

She knew it was true, and did not try to combat it. It had ever been her secret pride, after years of Foster's disappointments, to know Paul was an Adams and "smart."

"What I mean is," the old bookkeeper went on dreamily, "that I have never been a force for anything. Anybody would have filled my place and nobody counts my influence for good. I've been a plodder — never late, never absent, that's all."

His wife bent her head over her mending, unable to trust her voice for the moment.

"You take our president," he said. "Think what a force, what a tremendous power he has been and is—in the city, in the bank, in his home. A man came all the way from Australia to consult him —think of that! I don't count the money he has so honestly made, though it has let him do thousands of fine things for the poor, but I often think of his influence among the boys — the wonderful power his position gives him to command imitation. I might say the same things to them and they would just smile behind my back. Yet he was a very surly boy when he began at the Barton National where I was a clerk."

"He is a wonderful character," she agreed eagerly. "But I know he isn't a bit better, dearer husband than you, Ben Foster, for all his money!"

Foster put out his hand and patted her knee.

"Nothing partisan about you, is there, honey?" he chuckled. "Why, Martha, I believe that's the door-bell."

The little old lady ushered the gentleman in with a flutter of surprise and pleased excitement. The man with the resolute chin and kind eyes, the frosted hair, and round, solid figure, could be no other than the Old Man. She beamed delightedly as she took his hat.

"This is Mr. Hammond, Martha," Foster said smiling at her pleasure. "You will excuse my not rising, sir?"

The president took the chair she had just vacated, his well-bred, kindly spirit forbidding his showing the relief he felt at his reception. He was glad to come, yet he had dreaded it more than he realized.

"You must not wonder at us," Foster said apologetically. "We cannot take this as you would. Martha and I know we cannot be parted long, so we do not grieve much. We are only thankful that the doctors give me two whole days. It is kind of you to come, sir."

The little old lady from her seat in the far corner, smiled at his back and went on with her mending. She had a very feminine pride in his coming, and was glad of the automobile at the door.

"I came to tell you two things," the president said slowly. "One is that I will do anything in the world for your wife and boy if you will tell me what you wish. If there is nothing now there may be something in the future, and I shall stand always ready. Your son—"

"My boy comes from Wyoming to-night," Foster said gratefully. "Thank you, sir, but I am a simple man and I have laid by all that my Martha needs and more. She is going to stay right here with my niece, but if she ever needs a friend she will be proud to remember you, sir, who have always been so kind to me. We are much honored at the thought. Our Paul has a splendid position and a good home. Thank you, sir."

"Then there isn't a thing?"

"I am sorry to disappoint you, sir," the bookkeeper said whimsically. "But there is not. I have only one regret, but if I were to live it all over again I could not change it. I suppose there are some natures that must be so, but I would give much to know I had been a power or had had some influence in the world. It must be so wonderful to do once what *you* do all the time."

The younger man raised his deep, dark eyes and looked steadily at the withered face before him.

"Do you think I have done anything?"

"Yes; oh yes, yes!"

"Then listen."

The great man leaned forward, his elbows on his knees and his hands clasped.

"This is the second thing I wanted to say. Forty years ago I came out of the Southern mountains a raw, untamed boy, to be your messenger in Barton. Northern ways were new to me, Northern voices harsh, and I was desperately homesick. Big as I was, I often cried myself to sleep, and my heart-ache was so sharp I often dream of it now and waken with a shiver."

A sudden movement of sympathy from the corner interrupted him a moment and then he went on:

"The other boys called me surly and stupid and let me severely alone, so I fell in, quite naturally, with the wilder youths of the village. I did not understand their kindness but I do now. I have seen so many boy-tools made sharp by loneliness, in my day."

Foster gazed at him in incredulous amazement. This, the great, the successful, the most wonderful man—

"There was a plan," the president went on haltingly, "to get money—never mind how—and I was to get it. Then we were to leave on the eleven o'clock freight for Boston and scatter. The plot was clever and our tracks were to be well-covered by our friends. I had little to do with any of it, and I did not realize they had put all the risk on my shoulders, all the criminal-share. I have never told any person this but my wife, and it comes rustily and clumsily, but you understand."

Foster put out his hand to clasp the president's and drew it back tremblingly, unnoticed.

"That afternoon," he went on, "as I came by the directors' room, I saw you talking with the cashier, and I slipped behind the door to avoid being seen. Froberg had called you in, evidently, as you were going home, for you had your hat in your hand and your overcoat was on. It was the day of the blizzard, do you remember?"

Foster shook his head.

"Froberg was saying something about me; he did not trust me, he said. I was so surly and had such a hang-dog look. It made my blood boil to hear him, though I knew it was deserved, and I waited for your judgment in breathless suspense. You were known as conservative and just, even then."

Hammond's breathing was labored and his face was very white, but his eyes had a steady light in them that showed he was glad to tell, no matter what the effort cost him.

"You ran your finger around the little filigree edge of the table—I have that table in my room to-day, though it is so shabby—and you said—God bless you, Foster—you said, 'That boy is good and straight and honest and fair at heart, and

he'd die rather than touch a cent. He's just lonely, that's all, just lonely.' Oh, man, what it meant to me in shame and pride! I could have fallen on my knees before you, then and there, but I stayed behind the door until Froberg, satisfied, went away. As I passed you in the hall you put your hand on my arm. 'Hello!' you said. 'I thought you'd gone home. Don't you want to go to the show with with me, to-night?' Did I want to go!"

There was a long silence through the room, and then the millionaire rose and reached out his white hand for the thin, worn one.

"That was the night I was to take the eleven o'clock freight for Boston," he said huskily. "But I saw 'Hamlet' instead."

He held Foster's hand for a long minute and then laid it gently on the bed.

"I hope I haven't tired you," he went on gently. "But I did want you to know that, whatever I have been able to do in the world is to your credit, and that though the Almighty has permitted me more worldly honor, I am certain He will give you the higher place—There. And I am glad."

Then with dimmed eyes and bowed head the great man went silently out, followed by the little old lady in the soft gray dress.

Foster watched them go and then raised up on his elbow and gazed rapturously through the window into the blue Summer sky.

"Now, Lord!" he cried aloud. "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace."

The little lady came hurrying back.

"Did you call, Benjamin?" she asked.

"No—" he said gently, a new joy flooding his face, "no, Martha, I was just saying I am ready at last for my promotion."

The True Love Tontine

BY EDITH MACVANE

ILLUSTRATED BY D. J. LAVIN

THE talk had, as usual, veered about to the subject of Tomlinson, when all of a sudden Tomlinson himself swaggered in, bronzed and beaming, behind a large black cigar and a buttonhole of violets. It was the first time he had been seen in the Polyanthus Club since the night before his wedding, so that his arrival made something of a sensation. After the usual preliminaries of greetings, congratulations, and drinks, the pause that had come was broken at last by the unbelieving tones of McPherson.

"Well, old chap, and how does it feel to be a millionaire?"

The prosperous newcomer grinned as he signed the vouchers and leaned back comfortably in his armchair.

"Easy!" he said.

"Just draw your checks, eh?"

Tomlinson nodded. "I pay in my two thousand a year, Anne pays in her hundred thousand, we each have a checkbook, and there you are, you see!"

"Hm! Your two thousand! So you've gone back to work?"

Tomlinson grinned. "For the present," he said; "about the future, I don't know. Anne thinks office-work is bad for my chest," and he coughed shamelessly.

A shiver of righteous indignation went around the circle.

"And he calls himself a man!" murmured Adams.

"Not at all; I call myself an up-to-date New Yorker!"

"Come," grunted McPherson, "don't slander New York!"

Tomlinson waved his cigar.

"You set of green-eyed old images!" he cried. "Do you suppose I don't know what's in your minds?"

"If the cap fits—" began Adams.

"I don't know about the cap. But when it comes to shoes, now own up: Which one of you would refuse the chance to stand in mine?"

"My boy," responded Williams gently, "I don't wish to hurt your feelings, but you may count me, for one."

"I am probably in a state of darkness," remarked Adams, "but I have always regarded it as a man's place and privilege to support his wife—not to let her support him!"

"I hate to intrude so old-fashioned a thing as sentiment," added the gaunt McPherson, "but I ask simply: If you marry for money, what becomes of love?"

"I notice," observed Tomlinson dryly, "that you all bar the possibility of a rich woman being able to inspire that sentiment. However, we—I say, I have an idea!"

"Well?"

"Look here, you chaps are so down on the notion of heiresses, what will you bet that none of you will be married to one before the year is out?"

A ripple of outraged delicacy, faintly tinged with satisfaction, ran around the group.

"A safe bet, for men of our stamp!" declared McPherson.

"Then, let's make a pool on the strength of it," cried Tomlinson. "Look here, how many are there here"—he looked about the circle, counting noses—"nine, eleven, all unmarried except Benson, who is counted out, and me, the patron of the affair. Yes, there are ten of us. Will any gentleman who is afraid to risk fifty dollars that he wont marry for money within a year, please put up his hand?"

Not a hand went up.

"Ah," observed Tomlinson, "it's lucky for Anne this pool was not made a year ago; I should have had to join, out of pure self-respect! But to business!" he interrupted himself briskly. "Here are nine of you, willing to put up fifty apiece. Very well, as promoter of the scheme, I don't mind putting in five hundred. No, just to encourage this highmindedness, I'll raise the pot to an even thousand!"

He grinned as he pulled from his pocket a morocco-bound check-book, and proceeded with a fat gold pen to fill in the specified amount. With more or less hesitation, the other men followed his example—all except McPherson, who had left his check-book at home, and young Wigglesworth who, with a troubled face, promised to send the money to-morrow.

"To whom," inquired Adams with dignity, "shall we make out our checks?"

Tomlinson waved his green slip of paper with a flourish.

"To the secretary," he returned, "of the True Love Tontine!"

"Nonsense," cried McPherson.

Tomlinson passed by this scoffing voice with a benign smile.

"As promoter and organizer of the enterprise," he said, "I nominate Wigglesworth here, the junior member of our party, and a young lawyer of a growing practice—which we want to help grow—as counsel for the corporation, and trustee of the funds. Those in favor, say aye. Those against—it is a vote!"

He turned, beaming, to the tall youth on his left, who flushed to a ruddy pink at the sudden responsibility thus thrust upon him.

"I'm sure," he stammered, "you are very good; I'm sure, you honor me! But I don't understand, exactly—"

In an aggravating enjoyment of the situation, Tomlinson rang for a round of Lone-Trees, and lit a fresh cigar.

"Take your pen, young 'un," he said, "and draw up the agreement of this new organization for the encouragement of True Love, and the devil take all mercenary marriages! Funds subscribed, one thousand dollars; tontine terminable in one year from date. Any member of the tontine who, before that date, marries a woman with no money, gets the whole amount to help furnish the flat. If more than one member makes such a marriage, the fund is to be divided between them. Engagements made before that date to be considered valid, money payable on date of their ratification. You have that, Billy?"

Young Wigglesworth glanced up from his flying pen. He was a serious, hard-working young man, whose fair, dashing

Tomlinson swaggered in, beaming

good-looks belied the simplicity of his nature.

"What next?" he asked with his most careful professional air.

The members of the new corporation —unincorporated — glared with sudden interest through the blue clouds of cigar-smoke, at the rapidly forming memorandum of agreement, and the pile of checks beside it. Benson, who had married his typewriter the year before and bought his furniture on the instalment plan, sighed at the thought of his own precipitancy.

"And now," observed McPherson with his famous sarcasm, "what of the disinterested chaps—the lucky devils, like you, Tomlinson?"

"That's it!" cried the newly-made millionaire with enthusiasm, "have no mercy on them, the shameless fortune-hunters! Put it down in black and white, Billy. Any member of this tontine who, a year from date, has violated the expressed principles of the order and married a woman of property, shall, out of his own pocket—or his wife's—add another thousand to the accumulated fund, the whole amount to be divided between the eight irreproachable survivors — two hundred and fifty apiece—the promoter, of course, being counted out as hopelessly tainted. That's all, I think?"

"One moment," interposed the counsel, raising his candid blue eyes from the weighty document on which they were bent, "suppose nobody marries at all?"

The promoter reflected for an instant.

"In that case," he replied with delight, "a celebration for the crowd—the promoter counted in, this time! I say—"

"And I say," interposed the insinuating voice of Wilkinson, "why wait a year to find out what we know already, that this crowd isn't the marrying kind? Make it six months—that will bring us to the first of August—and if no one has turned tail by that time, we can charter a yacht, and stock her up, and make a spanking run down the Sound!"

"That's the idea!" assented many eager voices; and with a generous wave of the

hand, the promoter assented to the amendment.

"Make it six months, Billy," he commanded his young counsel. "And now, all you chaps step up and write your names!"

One by one the incorporated champions of disinterestedness stepped up to sign the articles of their faith. The name of William Wigglesworth, trustee and co-member—an irregularity which was declared trifling—came last of all. He signed with a grave sense of responsibility; these other men were without exception older than he, and he felt honored at being admitted to their intimacy. This tontine-business was indeed absurd; but beneath it lay a spirit of manly honesty which made him more than ever sensible of his good fortune in the friends which Fate had given to him.

The door swung open to admit a cool and glittering tray with a waiter somewhere in the rear.

Tomlinson jumped to his feet.

"Here, boys," he cried gleefully, "here's to the flat we all hope to see furnished within the next half-year! Come, fellows, bottoms up to the True Love Tontine!"

The toast was drunk with acclamation, and a slight air of superiority, of which the cheerful Tomlinson remained brazenly unconscious.

The affair being thus launched and christened, its promoter rose to his feet, wriggled into his new, sable-lined coat, picked up his gold-headed cane and satiny, London-made hat, and lit a fresh cigar. Then, as he sent his gun-metal cigar-case, with its monogram of black pearls, on a hospitable journey around the room, he surveyed the faintly supercilious ring with a benignant smile.

"By the way," he said, "I have a message for all you chaps, from Anne. She finds me such a treasure, you see, that she thinks my friends must be something like me—Yes, I told her you were all noble, high-spirited fellows, everyone of you—so she wants you to come up to the house—Riverside Drive, you have the address—for a little informal merry-making on Sunday evening. Everything to eat, drink, and avoid, and a hearty welcome, I can promise you that!"

In the varying smiles with which it was greeted, the bride's invitation proved itself acceptable. The prospective host, buckling his furred motor-gloves, paused for an instant at the door.

"By the way," he added, "you'll meet someone else, Sunday night, beside my wife. There's her sister, come on from Grand Rapids to spend the Spring with us. She's a pretty girl; some people find her almost prettier than Anne. But unfortunately, she wont interest any of you chaps. She has the same fortune, you see, as my wife, in Edible Breakfast Food preferred—two millions, or a trifle over, poor girl! So long, boys. See you Sunday!"

This happened Monday. To say that the time till Sunday did not seem long to the youngest among the invited guests would be to say what was not true. Since leaving the friendly atmosphere of his university, Billy Wigglesworth had spent four lonely, hard-working years among the tumultuous millions of Manhattan. Already, his work as junior counsel in the half-dozen cases which luck had brought to him, had attracted a measure of favorable attention. Some time in the past year, he had thought himself entitled to move from his boarding-house room, third-floor-back, to a twelve-by-ten apartment in a new bachelor establishment, which seemed to him for the moment the embodiment of luxury. Just before the new year, the friendship of McPherson had inducted him into membership in the Polyanthus. The dues had perhaps been a trifle heavy for him, but then, the advantages of meeting such men as its members was worth the strain of a little extra work on his part.

This Monday's unexpected levy of fifty dollars was indeed something in the way of a blow. But its destined purpose was one of which, in spite of his affection for Tomlinson, he heartily approved; and beside, it was luckily possible for him to fill the financial gap by countermanding the new evening-suit, which on the strength of his last case, he had just ordered. Where did he ever go, that he should need new evening-clothes? Luckily, Mrs. Tomlinson's invitation, the first

one he had received this year, was for Sunday-evening, when warpaint was unnecessary In the intervals of his breathless scurryings from the court-house to the record-office and back again, in his momentary lapses from the ponderous calf-bound volumes which filled his evenings, he laughed at himself for the childish manner in which his mind ran on Sunday-evening!

For Billy Wigglesworth, though filled with ambition and a thirst for hard work, was still young, and his life was lonely. In spite of his professional surroundings and his professional acuteness, he had preserved to a singular degree the simplicity and the shy, unspoken illusions not usually associated with the urban virtues—in short, a thoroughly prepared victim.

Harriet, over the steam of her chafing dish

And when, at last, Sunday-evening came around, and from the gay welcome of Mr. and Mrs. Tomlinson he turned to confront a smile of indescribable sweetness curving a pair of scarlet lips, and beneath the winning glance of two blue-gray eyes, there was, by the laws of Nature herself, only one result possible.

Combustion is never spontaneous, the scientists tell us. There must always be the juxtaposition of certain chemical agents; but given these agents—and the juxtaposition, if that is a gift—no other result is possible except combustion. Accordingly, as the evening went on, the shy, susceptible heart of young Wigglesworth found itself, for almost the first time since it had begun beating, unmistakably, unmercifully aflame.

The Tomlinson dining-room, with the conservatory adjoining, glittered with small, pink-shaded candles and large pink orchids. The "Veuve Cliquot" was superabundant, the *menu* a triumph, Mrs. Tomlinson, a fat, pretty little woman—likewise in pink—laughed with pleasure at the satisfaction, testified and manifest, which her husband's friends showed in her entertainment.

"Now, how dear of you!" she responded to a complimentary allusion of McPherson's to the arrangement of the wall-decorations, "though I must confess, it was no doing of mine, or Bob's either. It was my little sister here, you see, that did the whole thing for us. And now that she has made the house ready for us, she runs it for me. She has all the practical sense of the family, haven't you, Harriet darling?"

Harriet laughed over the steam of her chafing-dish. In the center of each cheek, when she laughed, there appeared a phenomonen like an inverted rose petal—a most deceptive little phenomenon; though to the naked eye it appeared shallow, like a leaf of the above mentioned blossom, yet careful scientific inquiry might prove it sufficiently deep for a man—or for several men—to fall in and lose, not only himself, but all will for ever scrambling out again.

Billy Wigglesworth's handsome blue eyes gazed at her wistfully, and his breath came and went a trifle more rapidly than usual as he waited for her reply.

"Now, Anne!" with a faint deepening of her soft color to the tint of the fluffy candleshades and embowering orchids, "you don't have to advertise me, you know, dear!"

"Oh, don't I?" cried her sister archly. "And how am I ever to get rid of a bad little thing like you, if I don't paste up the fences with testimonials to your good points?"

Tomlinson's foot trod faintly on McPherson's, beneath the protecting folds of damask. It was perhaps lucky for Mrs. Tomlinson's peace of mind that she did not know how little aid she might expect, in the point mentioned, from this particular assembly of to-night!

McPherson smiled stiffly, and withdrew his foot. It seemed to him, perhaps, that Miss Harriet was in need of a strong manly hand, to regulate the alcohol lamp of her chafing-dish. The upright Adams held the heiress' bottle of Worcestershire; the insinuating Wilkinson endangered his thumb by carving her lemons into jagged slices. In spite of their strict principles, it was evident that the members of the new tontine-association were not set with an uncompromising bitterness against rosiness and dimples and waving pale brown hair—even when the said hair was confined by a comb of South-sea tortoise, studded with immense emeralds. Billy Wigglesworth's eye, however, was upon the emeralds; then it slipped despairingly to the modest little rope of pearls and the simple girlish frock of white Irish lace beneath them; and as he realized the facts symbolized by these delicate adornments, his spirit grew cold within him to a degree that rendered his sautéd mallard chilly and tasteless within his mouth.

Mrs. Tomlinson's little Sunday-evening supper was, beyond possibility of doubt, an immense success.

"There's no use talking," declared Williams, as with the starlit river at their backs, the party strolled toward the humming blackness of the elevated, "old Bob had taste!"

This candid admission met with no immediate response from his high-minded associates, partly, no doubt, because even the bride's blooming good-humor had not quite dispelled their suspicions of Tomlinson's mercenary spirit, partly because they were in the first enjoyment of the spicy Havanas of special importation, with which their lavish host had sped their parting.

McPherson removed his rosy-tipped cigar from the grim, black-fringed slit which served him as a mouth.

"Not a bad little woman!" he admitted, with caution, "not a bad little woman at all, and then—her sister! What did you think of her, now?"

The face of the youngest member of the party was hidden by the conflicting shadows of two neighboring arc-lights, else it might have been remarked that his boyish features appeared suffused by a fine blush, and that he bit at his cigar with the jerky vehemence of an Arkansas congressman enjoying a dry smoke. His silence, however, passed unnoticed, as Adams responded carelessly:

"A very pretty girl, well groomed and all, but not—"

"I know what you are going to say," interposed Wilkinson, "not quite our style! Of course these Western girls—"

Van Nostrand's lazy tones took up the tale.

"Yes, these Western girls! They are all very well, stylish and that. But for genuine seasoned New Yorkers like us, it would take more than two millions—"

Wigglesworth sighed to himself. Though his soul revolted indignantly from the manner of their expression, it was evident to his soberer reason that these friends of his were actuated by a

more prudent resolution than his own. And a half-hour later, as with his Sunday raiment carefully disposed upon its hangers, he sat down in his old tweeds for a short period of grinding—as his eye traveled from the arid tomes before him to the walls of the little apartment which a month before had appeared so splendid to him, he was conscious of a sensation which he had never known before. There was something in this world that he wanted, with a tender thrill at the dream of its possession, an unreasoning despair at the looming possibility of its loss, which only youth can know.

"Hang it!" he cried fiercely to himself, as he brought his fist down upon the table with a desperate energy which set his tobacco-box clinking against the neighboring bottle of Scotch. "Hang it, what business has a girl like that to have two million dollars!"

The Winter snows were carted away, the Winter slush dried to whirling dust, in the narrow defiles between beetling apartment-houses and precipitous office-buildings. The island's few untortured spots of earth stirred into life, clothed themselves in moist green, faded to dusty olive brown. On all the avenues, from *the* avenue to Eighth, Spring millinery burst its buds, bloomed, wilted, and vanished, or persisted beneath the pretence of an ornamental veil. The *Social Register* was laid useless upon the shelf, though the directory was doing as active business as ever. In short, it was the latter end of July. The Tomlinsons, with the attractive Miss Harriet Paige, had departed for the country-home at Rye, and Billy Wigglesworth remained to broil and toil in town.

The car began its obedient flight

Not that he objected to the toiling, which he very reasonably regarded, if not as the object, at least as the justification of his existence. Even the broiling would have appeared as a penalty of slight moment, had either process seemed to bring him one whit nearer to that objective point toward which, since last January, his yearning eyes had been fixed. This objective point, however, this epit-

ome of womanhood, this dream, this lustrous vision, this mysterious enchantment, was circled about with fairy rings of green, and the green bore, to a sickeningly large amount, the stamp of the currency of our dear country.

"I think I see myself," said Billy to himself, something like two thousand times in the last six months, "offering this hand of mine, which pulls in something like two thousand dollars per annum, to the heiress of two millions. Would she laugh at my nerve, I wonder now!—and the other fellows, if they heard of it—"

The other fellows, indeed, had early in the game ceased from the assiduous attentions which the unfortunate Billy, in spite of himself, had prolonged until his Beloved's departure in early June. The True-Love Tontine, with its scathing arraignment of the fortune-hunter, still remained as an active principle, a hideous living force. The time was near at hand, indeed, for its disbanding and settlement; yet for its treasurer and counsel, even after its legal demise, to court the scorn of its members, to proclaim himself a renegade from its doctrines of manly independence.

The Polyanthus bore the usual whitish brown-holland and straws-in-ice aspect which marks the city-club in summer. Williams, at the piano, drummed out "So Long, Mary" in languid opposition to a hand-piano and "Dearie" at the corner of the avenue. The rivalry appeared to afford him pleasure, and with a thermometer of ninety-seven, none of the rest of the group had the energy to offer militant arbitration. The members of the True Love Tontine, excepting Van Nostrand, who was off spending his vacation in New Jersey with an aunt, who had money, sat around in various stages of perspiration, bad-temper, and eccentric costume which, in fact, suggested anything but True Love.

"It may be 'So Long, Mary,'" growled McPherson, "but I doubt if it's so long as that. Isn't an hour enough for you, Williams?"

Williams, with dignity, took his revenge by changing into "Holy City." The crowd groaned feebly—all but Billy Wigglesworth, who, before the cold, virgin charms of an untasted gin-rickey, gazed into space, and deliberated, till his head grew hotter than the thermometer, on the answer which he should send to the invitation at that moment folded in his pocket.

To accept meant capitulation, humiliation, if not of one kind, then of another. Yet to refuse—impossible!

"I say," Adams' voice, with nods of sudden import, broke in upon the reverie, "are all of you chaps asked down to Tomlinson's for the week-end to-morrow?"

Billy Wigglesworth, startled, raised his unhappy young head. "To Tomlinson's?" repeated Wilkinson carelessly, as he cut the tip of a fresh cigar, "yes, I did have a note from Mrs. Tomlinson, yesterday—"

"And are you going?"

In an unreasonable acuteness of interest, which raised his temperature at least two degrees, young Wigglesworth waited for the reply.

"No, as it happens, I am not," growled Wilkinson languidly; "another engagement, you see, to fish up at Greenwood Lake. Sent Mrs. Tomlinson my regrets, to-day!"

"And you, McPherson?"

"You think I can leave the office with three of the chaps off on their vacations? No week-ends for me. Sent Mrs. Tomlinson my regrets, yesterday!"

Billy sighed mournfully, as the same question and the same answer went around the circle. That the jovial week-end party was not to be, seemed foreordained; so why should he run counter to the decrees of Providence, by a solitary acceptance? And after all, should he not be grateful for any exterior aids to his resolution of keeping forever out of that enchanting, unattainable presence?

"By the way," inquired Williams, pursuing his ghoulish task by rattling the dry bones of "Bedelia," "is that girl still there with them—that rather pretty little thing, Mrs. Tomlinson's sister?"

At this inadequate description of her who, to him was the World's Desire, Billy started indignantly. The flame of his silent wrath was however lost in the torrid twilight, as Adams replied with a

yawn, "Little Miss—little Miss Harriet something or other? Yes, her stay is indefinitely prolonged, Tomlinson told me —"

"More chances for an heiress in New York, than in Grand Rapids, Mo., or Wis.—which is it anyway?" came Williams' voice from the piano—a voice interrupted by the rattling chuckle which did McPherson duty as his laugh.

"An heiress—pshaw! What makes you think the girl's an heiress?" he growled sardonically, and the gin-rickey half way between Billy's face and the table, returned to the table with emphatic suddenness.

Harriet

For the first time in the conversation, Billy found his voice.

"Didn't Tomlinson tell us so himself," he asked in tones which all his effort could not make perfectly steady, "the first day that he asked us to meet her, last January sometime?"

"Yes, old Tomlinson, the prize-jollier of the crowd! I have it on good authority, Mrs. Tomlinson's fortune is from her uncle, the inventor of the Edible Breakfast Food. The little one hasn't a cent —that is, except what her sister allows her. Old Tomlinson was just trying to be funny—to put the joke on us, after our getting up that tontine-business you see!"

Through the circle ran the rustle of a distinct sensation, and Adams laughed grimly as he answered:

"Well, he didn't catch us, that's all. By the way, that tontine is pretty near maturity—I say we appoint a committee to go over to Hoboken and look at yachts, next week!"

This proposal evoked the first animation that the crowd had shown.

"We'll appoint the treasurer and two others, as committee of—Hello, where is the treasurer?"

But at that instant Billy Wigglesworth was down-stairs, dictating a rush-message to the night-operator:

MRS. TOMLINSON,
RYE, NEW YORK:
Accept kind invitation many thanks expect me to-morrow five-fifteen.
WILLIAM G. WIGGLESWORTH.

To-morrow arrived in Rye with five-fifteen; with five-fifteen arrived the train from New York, and simultaneously with the train, a glittering, dark green Malaine drew up at the neat granite curb of the little station. And as a result of all these coincidences, an airy shape in pale cream-color leaned out across the high wall of the tonneau, toward a tall young figure in gray tweed which, with a curious impatience, pushed and jostled its way through the crowd to the waiting automobile.

"Oh, Mr. Wigglesworth," cried the sweet tones of Miss Harriet Paige, "I am so glad to see you!"

For a moment their eyes met, blue eyes and gray. Then, as the newcomer stowed himself and his kit-bag in the tonneau beside her, the young lady turned away with a slight flush to address the waiting chauffeur.

"Take us for a short run down the beach road, Rabusson, and see that we are home at half-past six!"

Then as the car began its obedient flight, she turned back with one of her enchanting laughs to meet the dazed smile of the young man beside her.

"My brother and sister, you see," she

said, "have gone out in the knockabout, at New Rochelle, so I have the car to myself for the afternoon. I hope you don't object to the idea of a little ride, before we go home to dinner?"

Did he object to it? His reply was hardly more than inarticulate through the flying air, for he was absorbed in the contemplation of a little pointed face, tinted by the sun to a delicate transparency of brown, and whipped by one or two dark, curling locks which had escaped from the confines of the coral-colored motoring-veil. It seemed to him that that face, and the two clear eyes, like gray twilighted pools, which met his ardent glance with so inquiring and so luminous a gaze—it seemed to him that beside him was the one fixed point of a flying, twanging universe of rushing trees and houses and blue glimpses of the sea. And into this unheeded world, sweeping past them into the void waste, had fallen the barrier which his misconception had raised between them.

In a garbled flash of recollection, a line of poetry forced upon him in far-off school days, danced brokenly in his brain.

"She's not a millionairess, therefore to be wooed; she is a woman, therefore to be—"

Ah, was it possible—was it possible? And, in the ecstacy, born of hope and of contemplation, which surged upon him, he hardly knew when, where or how the Great Question escaped from his breathless lips.

He waited while his distracted gaze was fixed upon her averted head, wrapped in streaming coral color against a background of flying blue and green. Then all thought was driven from his mind, for when her face was turned towards him again, it was dyed to a pink which melted veil and dimples together into one flower-like confusion; her red lips quivered in a little smile, in her gray eyes there was a liquid transparency whose sparkle shed a sudden flood of light upon his soul.

The tonneau walls were high; only the chauffeur, if he turned his head, could see that her hand was the prisoner of his. And at forty-five miles an hour, it is not the place of the chauffeur to turn his head. Chauffeurs should be cautious.

The car swooped into a wooded defile, where the road dipped between two shadowy banks.

"Dearest!" said Billy with sudden ardor, and a reckless resolution to prove his own unbelievable good fortune. Her glance, her hand were in his. As the car dashed into the open level again, Billy put up his hand, with a blissful laugh, to disentangle the pink chiffon streamer which had whipped itself about his neck, and before they had reached Stamford, the wedding was set for October.

"But tell me," asked Harriet with her little soft laugh, as the car spun along above the paling waters of the Sound, "Billy dear, how you ever got up your courage to ask me? Like Mrs. Todgers, I've seen the question on your lips a dozen times, in the last six months! For you were afraid of me, you may as well own it; you were awfully afraid of me, Billy dear!"

Billy laughed in blissful security. Should he ever again be afraid of anything in this wide delicious world? Nevertheless, he had no shame in acknowledging the truth of her charge.

"Of course, I was afraid of you darling!" he answered boldly, "for aren't you yourself, the Only One in the whole world? And besides, I thought all the time, you see, that you were a haughty representative of our capitalist class. It was only last night that I found out, you see, that you didn't have millions. Dearest, that's the reason, you see, that I dared to come to-day!"

She smiled at him, and for an instant he felt her soft fingers tighten upon his own.

"You've come at last, yes, bad boy. And now that you are here, you sha'n't get away so easily. But if you got such an idea into your head about my millions, who was it that disabused you? What kind friend—"

"McPherson," answered Billy happily, "told us last night, it was all a hoax about your being an heiress—"

He stopped short. To his surprise, her bright face showed a shadow of annoyance. Then she broke into a peal of her own delightful laughter.

"Mr. McPherson!" She repeated the name after Billy with a delicate mockery. "Upon my word, that's good of Mr. McPherson to go around with stories about me—"

Billy stared at her bewildered. "What do you mean, dear?" he asked.

She tossed her head with its streaming wreaths of coral and flying strands of dark hair.

"Nothing," she cried with a laugh, "but it amuses me. How does he expect his secrets to be kept, I wonder, if he doesn't refrain from gossiping about other people?"

Billy's bewilderment grew on him.

"McPherson's secrets?" he asked. "What secrets? Ah!"

She laughed into his suddenly comprehending eyes. "What?" he said, "you mean to say that McPherson—"

She nodded. "Last January," she answered.

Billy gasped. "I noticed," he reflected aloud, "that he has not called since January. But McPherson. I can't understand it!"

She made a pretence of drawing away her hand.

"You flatter me, Mr. Wigglesworth!" she said with dignity; "you find it incomprehensible that a gentleman should wish to marry me?"

He shook his head, still speechless from the amazing blow of her revelation.

With laughing resentment, Harriet swept on:

"Very well, though it is not nice in me, I admit it, to tell such things, then I can assure you, there have been other people! Mr. McPherson was not the only one, before you finally decided to do me the honor—"

"What?" cried Billy, his head swimming. "What?"

She held up her fingers daintily checking off the names.

"In January," she said, "there were Mr. McPherson, Mr. Adams. In February, Mr. Williams, Mr. Van Nostrand, Mr. Wilkinson. In March—"

"You mean to say," interrupted Billy, "that those men have all proposed to you, those chaps from the Polyanthus, that wouldn't marry money on any account —and we found out only yesterday, that you didn't have millions to your name!"

She nodded her head solemnly, and her delicate tones came to him crisp and unmistakable through the wind of their flight.

"Every single one of them!" she said.

Billy Wigglesworth

Then, as Billy continued to sit silent, and staring, she turned toward him with a sudden laughing vexation.

"I think," she cried, "that we have talked long enough about your friends. Now let's talk about ourselves—that's the only really interesting subject in the world, I'm sure!"

Billy turned back to her.

"Dearest," he said, "when I think that you have thrown away all of those other chaps for me! For Wilkinson is making a pile of money, every year; and Van Nostrand is going to have a half million or so from his aunt. And I, how much do I make? We'll have to begin pretty small at first, you know. But I'll work so hard for you, dear! And then—" a

sudden idea, humorous, delicious, comforting, flashed into his mind, "and then, darling, there's a little money, you see, that I can count upon at once. Just a thousand or so—enough to furnish a little apartment for us—"

She turned her pretty pink face and gray eyes toward him.

"What!" she said, "are you so proud, you wont let me use any of my own money? I have such a tiresome heap of it —dearest boy, help me to spend it, don't be stuffy about it, please!"

He took in his breath, which the flying air tore from him and tangled into a gasp.

"What!" he cried, "you mean to say, you're an heiress after all! You mean to say, that McPherson—"

"Called the grapes sour? He's not the first, poor man!" she answered placidly. "But remember, Billy dearest, you are caught now, with all your pride. Though just to please you," she leaned toward him with a suddenly revealed tenderness throbbing in her voice, "just for you, I'll let you furnish that flat to start with, my independent darling!"

He laughed ruefully at a sudden idea.

"No," he said slowly, "I am afraid I made a little mistake just now. You see what a beggar you have chosen for your husband, dear Harriet. I am not a thousand dollars in, after all, I am a thousand dollars out!"

The car turned in at a poppy-bordered road. At the far end of the smooth green lawn, upon the wide vine-covered piazza, appeared the waiting forms of the genial Tomlinson and his chubby, smiling wife. With a long drawn breath of happiness, Billy tightened his clasp upon the soft fingers enclosed in his own.

"But ah!" he cried, "what do I care for the tontine, after all, now that I have the true love."

A Corner in Turtle

BY JOHN D. SWAIN

ILLUSTRATED BY FREDERICK J. MULHAUPT

"WHAT I want is atmosphere," said Strang, finishing the last drop of his black coffee, and feeling for his cigaret case. "I cannot live without atmosphere! I confess to a longing for the sort of nocturnal prowling indulged in by Haroun-al-Raschid, for instance. He had but to skulk, disguised, around the back of his palace, and marvelous adventures befell him; adventures seen in a glow of old gold and blue, toned down with a haze of hasheesh smoke, and accompanied by the faint whining of a one-stringed fiddle. I fancy the Just One would perish from very *ennui* in New York, with all its boasted resources."

"Now, curiously enough, you are entirely wrong," said Thornton, who had listened patiently to Strang's jeremiad. "Where are we to look for adventures? Where dwell men and women, with the capacities to love, hate, envy, and fear one another. Why, if I were desirous of genuine adventures, barring, of course, as you have said, crime and intrigue, I should settle in New York or London."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Strang, flicking the ash from his cigaret. "You might walk the streets of New York for a month, with no more exciting adventure than a word or so with some wretched creature of the town, or a few questions from a suspicious patrolman. Of course, if you were to select the right section, you might get sand-bagged, if that be your idea of an adventure!"

"Billy, you could not intelligently seek an enterprise for a week without unearthing several! If in Bagdad, why not New York?"

Thornton leaned forward eagerly.

"I admit only the last objection," said Thornton, "and that merely in degree. The police are always a nuisance, and quite without imagination. Nevertheless, an adventure of to-day should prove equally as fascinating as one in ancient Bagdad or Paris; modern conditions have, on the whole, added to the complex problem of life.

"Look here," he said, "to put an end to the discussion, I will wager a bottle of wine that we can enjoy an adventure any evening you like."

"Do you mean to tell me you could be certain of going out now and unearthing a mystery, as you would buy an evening-paper?"

Thornton smiled. "I simply say that I will wager a bottle of wine," he declared, "that we can have our adventure on any night, for the asking. If you care to bet that we fail on three successive nights, then I will give you odds of five to three, or even a little better."

"It is a foolish bet for you to make, but I will take it," said Strang.

"Done!" cried Thornton with heartiness. "Foolish bets are the ones you should take up. We are in street-clothes, which is fortunate, as an adventure is an impromptu function, and does not always terminate at a fashionable hour; and dinner-coats look rakish at breakfast."

"Where shall we go to seek our fortune?" asked Strang, a little suspiciously, settling back to enjoy a cigar.

"There you go again, Billy! Always the idea that one must go somewhere; that nothing interesting can happen at home. Why go anywhere? Adventure spells chance; and Dame Fortune is capricious. Follow her too hard and she will flee from you. If you really care to go anywhere, and have a good reason for it, by all means let us go. Otherwise, I find this coffee excellent, your company delightful. Where can we seek a better place in which to await our adventure? It is rather stuffy here, but I daresay it is most everywhere to-night."

"Oh very well, Jim; if you really wish to buy me a bottle of wine, and are taking this delicate way to do it, I am quite agreeable. I make only one suggestion: let us open the bottle now, whoever pays for it."

"Good idea that," agreed Thornton; and they were shortly enjoying a cool, beady flask of Burgundy.

"Adventures," said Thornton, in the confidential period of the third glass, "come to those who are in a receptive and attentive mood. Your mood is receptive, but not attentive; therefore, you overlook most promising openings. Mine is attentive, but not receptive; therefore, I seldom follow up a clew, because I am too indolent to care for the real toil and trouble an adventure frequently entails.

"The slightest perusal of your morning-paper must convince you that scores of adventures are taking place all about you; some of them, as crimes solved by the police; others cleverly guessed by the reporters; but many remaining as enigmas. See any promising material hereabouts?"

Strang glanced carelessly at the patrons of the place. A fat German and his wife, with two babies, noisily exploring their *krafft-suppe;* a thin, hirsute foreigner, evidently Italian, speculating sadly upon a ragout; an overdressed man, with flushed face, talking earnestly to an insolently pretty girl, who shrugged her slim shoulders beneath their black net lace; and a pale young man wrangling with the waiter over the *menu.*

"Nothing doing, Jim!"

"Look again; use your eyes and ears, son. Adventures do not begin with the explosion of a bomb, except in Russia!"

Strang scrutinized the diners more closely.

"Not an adventure there, I would wager another bottle, unless you care to follow up the horsey man and the girl in black. And that is not my idea at all, as I have told you."

Thornton sighed. "I should like another bottle, well enough; but I fear we lack the time. As you refuse to use your eyes, use mine. At my right sits a young chap in a blue funk over his dinner."

"Yes."

"He has been amusing the waiter for a few minutes."

"Oh! You did notice it? Well, what seems to be the trouble?"

"How should I know? He has just paid for a drink. Probably he thinks they overcharged him!"

"But he gave a liberal tip when he paid?"

"Well, then, I suppose he did not like his drink!"

"He immediately ordered another."

"Well," cried Strang, in exasperation, "how should I know? You don't expect me to pry into the altercations of a man with his waiter?"

"Sometimes I do. You musn't be too squeamish in the pursuit of adventure. Otherwise, it were better for you to seek it in melodrama, by the simple process of buying a ticket.

"The young man in question came in here ten minutes ago, perfectly sober, very pale, and evidently under strong excitement. He drank two 'Oak Trees' offhand, before he consulted the *menu*. He seemed positively afraid of that simple bit of pasteboard. He treated it as people sometimes treat telegrams. He longed to read it, but feared to; or so it seemed to me. At length he seized it and his eye traveled down about a third of its length —say to the fish-paragraph—and then stopped. He eagerly placed his order, and while awaiting it his nervousness seemed to increase.

"He drummed upon the table, toyed with his knife and fork, lighted a cigaret, laid it on the ash-tray, forgot it, and lighted another. Then his waiter returned without the order. He apologized; the young man was furious. All this apparently escaped you, save altercation with the waiter. Do you see anything unusual in it now?"

"I see a very ill-mannered fellow, by your account; nothing more."

Thornton's reply to this was curious. He scribbled a few lines on the back of his visiting-card, and sent it across to the young man, who sat, the picture of dejection, his chin on his two fists, staring gloomily at the *menu*.

"Jim, what crazy thing have you done now?" demanded Strang, his sense of propriety roused.

"I have sent for our Knight of the Rueful Countenance; simple observation can do no more for us. We need his assistance. It is better to send for him than to go to him; it attracts less attention, and renders a possible rebuff less conspicuous. If you must have your adventure, you must brave possible rebuffs; you cannot always afford to wait for the other fellow to speak first. But if looks are any criterion, he will not stand on ceremony to-night."

In fact, at this moment, the pale young man, who was with difficulty roused by the waiter, received the card, read it absent-mindedly, re-read it, then glanced across, and without displaying either hesitation or enthusiasm rose and came to their table, with an air of listless inquiry.

"My name you already know," began Thornton, with the friendly courtesy which was his natural air, "and this is my friend, William Strang. Mr. Strang dines at the Rospigliosi frequently, and is well acquainted with the management. He could not help observing your dissatisfaction with your waiter, and would be charmed to present you in person to the proprietor, whose delight it is to assure to his patrons every facility the place affords."

"But—" began Strang, recalling that the proprietor was now abroad buying his annual shipment of wines.

Thornton trod remorselessly upon Strang's foot, choosing, with his unerring instinct, a particular corn most certain to distract his attention.

The stranger had seemed to pay but little attention to Thornton's address, and slumped dejectedly in a chair, his hands in his pockets. He was rather a good looking chap, of a possible twenty-five years, carefully dressed, and belonging, Thornton guessed, to the class of idle, but not vulgar well-to-do.

Seeing that he was disinclined to talk, Thornton signaled to a passing waiter, and ordered three "Absinthe Climbers," a specialty of the establishment. When they were served, he raised his glass and said courteously.

"As you do not choose to avail yourself of our well-meant offer, I beg of you to pledge us, in token that you do not re-

sent it, and we will take our departure!"

Upon this the stranger sat up with a jerky suddenness, raised his glass, and emptied it at a gulp.

Now, one of the qualities of an "Absinthe Climber" is this: It does certainly stimulate conversation. Scarcely had the seductive liquor flowed down the throat of the young man than he brightened visibly, and evinced a disposition to talk, a disposition Thornton did nothing whatever to combat.

"My name, gentlemen, is Asher—Howard Asher, of this city. I presume you can believe that. But to expect you to believe my dilemma which I very much regret having made so noticeable, is to place a strain upon credulity it was never made to bear. There are times when I do not believe it myself! And as nothing you can possibly do will assist me in the slightest degree, I cannot think of wearying you with my private affairs."

Although he smiled pleasantly, his words came uncomfortably close to being a rebuff; but Thornton was not to be put off so easily.

"My dear Mr. Asher," he responded genially, "I believe I am the most credulous man living. Why, I even believe what I read in the Sunday-papers! And as for Strang here, his faith is positively childlike.

"Not for worlds would we intrude on your personal secrets; but how dare you assume that neither of us can be of any assistance to you? You know nothing of our influence, means, or resources. If your secret is one of delicacy, I hasten to proffer our apologies and depart; if it involves, let us say, a little adventure, here are two men boring each other to death for want of something to do. May I not hope that you are sent here to save us from ourselves?"

The stranger laughed mirthlessly.

"Unless one of you chances to have a morsel of green turtle, I do not see how you can possibly serve me, keenly as I appreciate an interest I have no right to expect. However, as my dilemma terminates here, and there is nothing more I can do, I will gladly repay your kindness in the only manner possible, by telling you my story. Unfortunately, there is no chance for an adventure, and although I am a ruined man, there is an element of *opera bouffe* which robs even my ruin of any dignity."

He fumbled in his pocket, produced a folded paper, and continued.

"This is a record of my bet—my fool bet—made two months ago at the Coronet Club. Are either of you gentlemen members?"

Strang bowed silently.

"Then you may possibly know Mr. Faraway—Mr. Allan Faraway?"

"I have the merest bowing acquaintance with him," was the reply.

"I envy you! Unfortunately, I know him more intimately. Mr. Faraway and I are enamored of the same lady—a most charming young person, I assure you, and an artist of great promise. May I ask you to pledge her in another of these—these 'Absinthe Climbers?' That is it. Let us pledge her—now that she passes out of my life forever."

Asher sat smoking in silence until the drinks were served, and the toast drunk.

"I am not a wealthy man; in fact, as New York goes, I am a poor one," he resumed. "I possess or shall possess for a few hours, about $30,000, conservatively invested. On the income I live cheerfully but not noisily.

"When I relate to you the terms of this wager," indicating the folded paper, "you will see why I have never dared to set up in business. I lack the commercial mind.

"Two months ago I dined with Faraway at the Coronet Club. I may say that at the time I had no notion of his feelings towards Miss—towards the lady I have referred to. During the dinner our talk drifted, or so I thought—although I now suppose Faraway cleverly steered it that way—towards the irksomeness of a restricted diet, of which our dinner had been no example. We had enjoyed some especially delicious turtle-steaks, prepared by the admirable Josef.

"'Isn't it singular,' remarked Faraway, 'that one so quickly tires of delicacies, especially delicacies possessing a characteristic flavor! Now, I suppose there are not three men in New York who could endure this admirable turtle,

though served in all the infinite variety of the ingenious Josef, once a day for a month.'

" 'Nonsense,' I objected. 'A man might grow mortally sick of it, but he could do it, if it were made worth his while! Most of us eat bread, coffee, and potatoes at least once a day all the year round, for that matter!'

" 'That is not the same thing at all,' said Faraway. 'Coffee is not a food anyhow; and neither bread nor potatoes have any very distinct flavor, as turtle has. Do you remember the story of the young man who wagered that he could eat quail—'

" 'You don't mean to tell me,' I interrupted, 'that you believe that hoary old fable?'

" 'Never mind what I believe,' said Faraway; 'we are all more or less tinctured with superstition, in one form or another! I will bet you can't eat green turtle once a day for one month; and I will bet anything up to $25,000 on it.'

"Now, I knew Faraway to be tremendously rich, and a reckless spender. I felt absolutely confident of being able to eat green turtle once a day for a whole year, if necessary; I could get it down, somehow. The temptation seized me to double my fortune by taking advantage of his voluntary proposition. Among other things, $25,000 added to what I already possessed, would enable me to marry without hardship. If you only knew the girl, gentlemen—"

Asher had suddenly digressed, but he almost instantly checked himself, however.

"To make a short story of it, I accepted his wager for the full amount, and it was agreed that once a day I should eat green turtle, cooked to suit my fancy, and that I should record the date and place, and append in each case the signature of the waiter serving me. These stipulations were entirely satisfactory to me, as I should not have cared to have Faraway pass over $25,000 to me on my mere say so.

"You will observe that Faraway had bet a sum practically equal to my entire fortune; a fact I now suspect that he was quite well aware of. At any rate, equally pleased with our wager, we parted, agreeing to meet at the Coronet one month later; the bet was to run from eight o'clock of the morning after the day I dined with Faraway. Perhaps this story bores you, gentlemen?"

"No! No!" he was assured. "Go on."

"Well, for about ten days I was perfectly happy. I had, as I believed, doubled my fortune by a method not held dishonorable among gentlemen, and which entailed no hardship on my part. I called frequently on the clever little artist I intended to propose to as soon as my wager was won.

"The only fly in my ointment, gentlemen, was the discovery that Mr. Allan Faraway was also a pretty regular caller at her studio. I ran across him several times; and as I could not regard these as mere coincidences, I was forced to the disagreeable conclusion that he must also call a good many times when I was not there. However, though Floretta showed in her frank, honest way that she liked him, I felt that she liked me even better, and I knew that Faraway's money would not count against me with her. So on the whole I enjoyed myself immensely.

"Of course I spent rather more than formerly, as men invariably do when they believe they have the money as good as in their fists. The green turtle caused me no anxiety whatever. I scarcely even grew tired of it, because I never ate it served twice alike; and as I patronized the best chefs in the city, the turtle was usually disguised in a halo of brilliant sauces; and I lunched and dined on soups, stews, chafing-dish creations, cutlets, and filets, until I verily believe I became no mean connoisseur of the lordly dish.

"Then, one day, I encountered unexpected difficulty in finding any green turtle. It seemed to have disappeared simultaneously from the *menus* of the cafés I had been accustomed to patronize. I was obliged to seek a new place—several new places—before I secured any. It puzzled me a little, it being in the height of the season for the dish. The next day it was even harder to obtain. The day after I was in a panic, it being late at night before I ran to earth a turtle-soup in an obscure restaurant, unknown to me.

"One day of the following week I was obliged to purchase some at a fishmarket, and cook it myself; and the price had trebled within the week, so the dealer told me, although he could furnish no reason for the shortage.

"Even then, idiot as I was, I did not suspect the truth, that Faraway was slowly but surely cornering the local market. Had I surmised this, I should have departed for Philadelphia or Baltimore. As it was, I found myself driven to wretched expedients, and my pleasant days were at an end. I had no time now to call at the studio, while perfectly assured that Faraway was profiting to the full at my expense. All my hours were occupied in pursuing the elusive turtle.

"One night, in particular, after a weary hunt lasting all day, I found some turtle in a sordid little German chophouse; and it was undeniably tainted. The waiter tried to dissuade me from ordering any, and was sorely puzzled by my insistence; and I had the devil of a time securing his attestation that I had partaken of it. He made certain that I must be an inspector looking for infractions of the pure food laws; I had to tip him $5, and even at that I am convinced that he signed an *alias*. I was obliged to eat the entire order, this being part of our agreement; and ill enough I was after it!

"Two days later, which brings us to this very afternoon, I came across a newspaper-paragraph which suddenly enlightened my stupid brain. It was to the effect that an unknown party had purchased an entire carload of several hundred green turtles destined for New York, paying a heavy premium for them; and that gourmets were likely to grumble at the 'Turtle Famine,' as it was expressed.

"Then I knew that Faraway had played me as a poker-sharp plays a novice, and that he stood in to win my money, and my sweetheart; for in all New York I do not suppose, gentlemen, there is a bit of the succulent turtle as large as my thumb!

"Of course it cost him something to do this, but I am positive that he would cheerfully spend three times the amount of the wager, if necessary, to freeze me out, as he knows I will not present myself penniless, as a suitor, to Floretta; and with me out of the way, his coast is reasonably clear. To confirm my suspicions, I visited several of the leading wholesalers of sea-food, and each and all told me that some mysterious person had cornered the turtle-market most effectively; though for what purpose, they could not guess, as there was no shortage in the South, and no effort was being made to throw a limited supply on the local market at enhanced prices.

"This, then, is my predicament, gentlemen: If between now and eight tomorrow morning I am unable to obtain a dish of turtle, I lose my $25,000 and the sweetest girl in New York. I believe I know better than any other man in town where to look for the delicacy; and when I am entirely at a loss, of what possible assistance can you be to me, unless one of you chances to have a private aquarium?"

He smiled in a ghastly attempt at mirth, and sank wearily back in his chair.

After a silence of some duration, Thornton remarked:

"Do you know, Mr. Asher, you seem to me to have been a good deal of a fool? Pardon me, if I speak brusquely; but just consider: You make a preposterous wager—all things considered, an outrageous wager. Then, instead of studying it in all its phases, you grasp merely the obvious inference that this man Faraway evidently intended you to grasp. At every stage of the game, you play into his hands. He does not stack the cards; you deal him aces! Not until the scheme is thrust under your very nose do you scent danger.

"You should have been alert. As you say, at the first hint of a scarcity of green turtle, you should have fled from New York as if it were Gomorrah. It was from the first obvious, even to you, that on the surface Faraway's bet was futile; yet, it never occurred to you to look beneath the surface. Excuse my bluntness, for we are going to try to help you!"

"Oh, I know I have been an ass!" assented Asher, gloomily. "And as for

helping me, it is too late for that now. All that you can do, if you are so minded, is to help me to forget it all for this last night!"

"We are not so minded," said Thornton firmly, consulting his watch. "It is now nine o'clock; we have eleven hours, if I have correctly understood you, in which to save you. This is not time for forgetting!"

Turning briskly to Strang, who had remained a silent and absorbed listener, Thornton said:

"We may as well begin here as anywhere, Billy. You are at home in the Rospigliosi. Call the head waiter, please!"

Strang bestirred himself and sent for the old man who has served the Maison Rospigliosi so many years.

"We want some green turtle, Jean," explained Strang. "We want it badly, and we do not care what it costs."

"I am sorry, sir," confessed the dignified Jean, "but green turtle is not to be had at any price. I do not believe there is any in New York."

"But why, Jean? It is in season, isn't it?"

"It should be, sir, and I cannot explain why it is so scarce. They say there is a turtle-trust, sir. I do not know, sir."

Asher groaned. "I would give $5,000 for one plateful!" he murmured.

The imperturbable Jean did not even glance at him. Nothing a diner-out might say ever surprised Jean. All old head waiters lose the capacity to be surprised.

"When did you last serve any green turtle?" questioned Thornton, taking a hand again.

"We have not served any here, sir, since Thursday week; but there was a small steak on ice this very afternoon. We sold it to a party who took it to be cooked outside, sir."

"Perhaps they would sell it to us, if we should explain!" cried Asher, eagerly. "Do you know who bought it?"

"I am sorry, sir, but I do not," admitted Jean. "It was no one I have ever seen at the Rospigliosi, sir. We sell many things—game, patties, pastry, and the like, to strangers who have been recommended to us by regular patrons."

"I'll bet Faraway bought that steak!" Asher bitterly grumbled.

"Well, that is about all we can do along this line," said Thornton, dismissing the old waiter. "Let us exercise our ingenuity. I thrive under opposition, and become positively obstinate. Let me see."

He leaned his chin on his hand, and pondered deeply.

"Here is a chance—a mere straw," he announced at length. "I am not a New Yorker, and belong to no clubs here; but my brother is a member of the Apician. The cooking is rather exceptional there, and the company dreadfully stupid; it is really a galaxy of gourmands. My brother always gives me a card, but, truth to tell, I prefer a dinner of herbs to the sort of alimentary repartee that prevails at the Apician.

"This is Friday; there should be a weekly *symposium* there to-night. If there is any green turtle in New York, it is as likely to be found there as any place I can think of, especially as it is so scarce. The Apicians dote on rarities, and feebly imitate the Romans with their nightingales' tongues and camels' humps. Yes, I think it worth while to try the Apician. I should never feel quite satisfied unless we did."

Thornton sent for a messenger, and rushed a card to the Apician, requesting a *menu,* signing his brother's name.

"See here," Asher spoke up, "I will not stir a step unless it is agreed that I am to bear all expenses."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Strang and Thornton in unison.

"Perhaps. But that is my decision. If I win, I shall have enough anyhow; if I lose, it wont matter. I will accept your kindly tendered assistance, but not a cent of your money. Do not strip me of my last shred of self-respect!"

"Very well," assented Thornton easily. "As you like. But what is it you are going to do if you lose?"

"I don't know," confessed Asher bitterly. "I never dared make an investment in my life. I have no business-instincts. All my money is in banks. If I lose, I shall have to draw most of it out anyhow; I may take the few odd thousand left me and have one glorious month in

Paris, or I may give it all to some Home, with the stipulation that I be cared for during life."

"The latter is the sounder proposition," said Thornton, "but neither one especially appeals to me. I think we had better win!"

The moments dragged on, with desultory chat and a few more "Absinthe Climbers," until the messenger returned, with a *menu* of the Friday *symposium* of the Apicians.

Scarcely had Thornton paid the boy and glanced at the *menu,* than he sprang from the table, called out to his companions over his shoulders and darted out of the door.

In a trice they had followed him, and were speeding away in an electric-cab.

"No time to lose!" panted Thornton. "Feed begins in ten minutes; green turtle *a la* Maryland; greedy Apicians wont leave a spoonful if we are late. They have no prejudices against second helpings of anything they fancy! My card will admit 'bearer and friends' at ten dollars *per.*"

So it did. And just as the three sank on their couches in the triclinium of the Apician Club, a file of waitresses, clad in soft white gowns and wreathed with roses, entered with steaming tureens.

A tremulous sigh of satisfaction escaped from Asher's lips, as he saw his troubles happily terminated.

Thornton's eyes sparkled with satisfaction.

"This was easy," he remarked. "I am almost sorry our adventure ends so tamely. But, had we failed here, I will confess to you that I should have had no mortal idea what to do next! Fall to—this is the hardest club to get into in town; hope no one recognizes you two as New Yorkers, or my poor brother will surely be fired. Only non-residents admitted, and they blamed seldom. I do not have to introduce you to anyone; no one here thinks or talks of anything save 'vittles' and drink. Once by old Cerberus at the door, no questions asked."

His monologue was cut short by a low moan from the prostrate Asher, awkwardly sprawled on his couch.

"It's only conger-eel!" he whispered, and his face seemed to have grown years older.

"You don't tell me!" cried Thornton, greatly perturbed. "Is this possible and at the Apician? I don't know," tasting his soup; "it seems like most turtle-soup I have had!"

"It probably is," groaned Asher. "Most turtle soup is conger-eel! But they can't tell me anything about *chelonidae* or any of its imitators. I k n o w!"

A tear splashed gently into his eel-soup.

"Why go back of the records?" urged Strang, who was immensely comfortable, and who wondered if he could ever screw up his resolution to rise from the couch. "Theoretically, and on the authority of a famous epicurean club, this is turtle-soup. It is at least as much so as most we eat, as you say yourself. Aint that good enough for Faraway?"

"It's not good enough for me, and that's the main point," Asher warmly insisted. "I am going to win fairly, or lose and go down in black ruin!"

"I'll tell you what," Thornton offered. "I know the *chef* quite well; in fact, he is a sort of *protegé* of my brother. I'll slip quietly up-stairs and find out all about it. You are so surfeited with turtle, Asher, that your taste may be temporarily paralyzed anyhow. Wait for me."

As quietly as possible he slid from his couch, hardly noticed by the busy Apicians, who were discussing their soup and sherry with inarticulate grunts of satisfaction, each one strictly intent on his own

The soup was removed, and an alleged turbot of astonishing size was being ushered in, when Thornton's disconsolate visage emerged from the Corinthian doorway of the triclinium, and his beckoning finger summoned them from the feast.

Asher rose with the alacrity of despair, Strang with the regret of a slightly corpulent young man enamored of his surroundings.

"It is conger-eel all right, all right," whispered Thornton, as he hurried them forth to the waiting cab

"Chef nearly had a convulsion; said he was ruined man if it ever leaked out.

Not a scrap of turtle to be had, he says; and knowing the rage of the Apicians whenever a number is changed on their eating-program, he took a chance on conger-eel. He got by, too; all except you, Asher.

"Incidentally, my reputation as a connoisseur is made with him. Of course I promised to guard his guilty secret with my life. We must hurry now; time is on the wing."

Thornton directed the chauffeur to drive to the nearest apothecary's, where he purchased their only business-directory at a fabulous price, and tore out the pages containing an inventory of the various cafés and restaurants.

There ensued several hours of a long, stern chase of the elusive turtle, and a wearisome round of cafés—glittering cafés; dull, sordid cafés; *risqué* and ultra-Bohemian cafés; foreign and domestic cafés; rich and exclusive cafés.

Though they really touched but the outer circle of New York's myriad eating-places, it seemed, after a few hours, that they had visited enough to feed the nations of the world at a sitting.

It was a rapid flight, a sudden pause, a glare of electric-lights, a burst of music, perhaps, a babel of laughter and talk, a furtive scanning of the *menu,* the arrival of an impassive waiter with napkin over arm and glasses of ice-water on a tray, a hurried question, the shrugging of servile shoulders, and away again into the night.

Often, however, they paused long enough for a round of drinks; thus their courage and enthusiasm gradually rose, despite repeated failures.

Now and again Thornton would nudge Strang and point out to him the fringe of an adventure.

"Here," he would say, glancing at some tragic face beneath a picture-hat, "beckons a rare emprise." Or again. "Yonder hovers a mystery;" and he would indicate some party of late diners who for one reason or another caught his fancy.

"In fact," he declared, having arrived at the oracular stage, "I cannot comprehend how one could possibly spend a single night in any café in New York, and avoid an adventure! Have we not a wager on the subject, my friend? And are we not, ourselves, already embarked on a desperate cruise?"

Desperate, indeed, it seemed. But at least the monotony of the succession of fast thinning cafés was about to be broken.

Towards dawn they found themselves alighting before a restaurant of some ostentation. Here shining brass griffins guarded a doorway of imitation verde antique; within were vast French mirrors, a ceiling of scandalous nymphs convulsively making their way through masses of cloud, like rolls of absorbent cotton, a skillful contrast of ebony paneling, and some expensively framed warnings that the management must disclaim all knowledge of or responsibility for lost hats or umbrellas.

A few sleepy waiters nodded within, and a solitary patron occupied a central table.

Not for at least three cafés had the trio assauged their now consuming thirst; the sickly dawn, the massive mirrors, above all, the spasmodic nymphs, depressed them exceedingly.

Without asking the usual question of the waiter, who resurrected himself from some dark corner in the rear; without consulting the *menu* even, they ordered three long, frigid, Scotch high-balls, dwelling lovingly on the word.

And even as they waited dully in the growing light, the ghastly half-dawn that serves chiefly to blur the electric-bulbs, the nostrils of Mr. Howard Asher expanded like the nostrils of the battle-sniffing steed; and in a tragic whisper he swore that he smelled the ambrosial odor of the unattainable turtle.

Silently, like a pointer, he wheeled about until his quivering nose flushed a savory cloud of steam rising from an ornate tureen before the solitary stranger.

The remarkable personality of this gentleman now engaged their attention for the first time. His was a squat, barrel-chested figure, clad in dinner-suit, with a clamoring waistcoat, and bearing in his shirt-front a diamond of priceless water.

At his side crouched a large, undershot, screw-tailed bulldog, whose facial

"Do you see any promising material hereabouts?"

resemblance to his master recalled at once the lamented Bill Sykes.

Rapidly, and with no little noise, the dog-faced gentleman was devouring green turtle, while Asher waited for a mere high-ball.

The three set up an outcry that brought their waiter on the run. Yes, the strange gentleman was eating green turtle. But green turtle did not figure on their *menu;* had not for many days.

Being a wealthy and fastidious gentleman, accustomed to having what he desired regardless of cost, also because he was an excellent patron, yet again because he was a power in the ward, and for other reasons not alleged, the management had sent especially to Baltimore for a fine fat turtle, the last of which was now being devoured by him.

No; the gentleman was not devoted to turtle; never before had he been known to order any. He merely liked to have his way.

"That's all," said Thornton curtly. "Fetch the high-balls. And now," he whispered, eyes glistening with excitement, "we have got to get that turtle-stew. By fair means, if we can; by foul, if we must!"

And without losing any time he crossed the floor and stopped before the dog-faced gentleman.

"Pardon me, sir, for interrupting you, but I observe that you are eating green turtle!" Thornton began.

"Well, what of it?" growled the squat stranger, fixing a pair of small, dirty gray eyes upon him.

"I wish I might tell you the entire story," explained Thornton, with his most engaging smile; "I am certain it would interest you. Three of us, on a wager, have visited some hundred cafés to-night, in search of green turtle, and I verily believe you are now enjoying the only morsel left in New York.

"You see, it is a bet; I may say it is a very heavy bet, and one that we cannot afford to lose. You seem to me to be a gentleman of courtesy and good fellowship; I am proposing that you come to our rescue, and let us have one plate of your turtle, enough to win our wager, allowing us to pledge you in a magnum."

The reply of the dog-faced gentleman was brief and to the point.

"You go to the devil!" he remarked, with spirit.

Thornton was abashed, but not discouraged.

"I am not drunk, and I am not intentionally fresh," he resumed. "See, here is my card; I have influential connections. I entreat your help; you are the only man in New York who can help me, or I should not force myself upon you. Many thousand dollars depend upon our bet; I will buy you the best dinner to be had in town, and pay you one hundred dollars spot cash for what is left of your turtle-stew! Am I on?"

The power in ward-politics spurned Thornton's card, and made as if to rise from his seat.

"Say, what do you take me for—a blooming fishmonger?" he cried. "I am telling you this is my turtle, and I am eating it. I can buy and sell fifty cheap sports like you and your fresh friends, with your come-on stories of phony-bets. In about another minute I'll spill you all over the restaurant! See?"

Thornton hastened back to his table, and the stranger, after favoring them with a brief and sinister glance resumed his meal.

"Think of that animal eating up $25,000 worth of turtle at a sitting!" moaned Asher. "Talk about Cleopatra!"

"Shut up!" commanded Thornton; "and listen. There is one helping of turtle left in that tureen. If you don't get it, you're done for, as far as I can see, and our adventure is at an end, without being a real adventure at all. We must rush the genial stranger, and seize by force what we cannot by strategy."

"But that is a felony!" gasped Strang. "It's stealing!"

"Well," argued Thornton, "in an adventure you've got to take things as they come, haven't you? Besides, it wont be a felony; no one will remember the stew. At the worst it will only be a misdemeanor. They can't even lock us up overnight, because it is already dawn. In the morning we go up and pay our fines for simple assault. And we may, of course, make a clean get-away! Isn't it worth

while? Isn't the girl worth it, Asher?" he concluded, turning suddenly to that unnerved young man.

"Yes," he admitted. "She's worth it."

From a neighboring market rose the clarion of a captive cock heralding the day. Thornton hastened to explain his proposed attack.

"We drink our high-balls first," he said, which they did, throwing down a greenback in payment.

"Then we rise, quite unostentatiously, as if to depart. As we pass the ward politician, I grab his chair and pull him over backwards on the floor. You, Strang, must watch the dog; here, wrap a napkin round your left fist, so; and if he makes for you, stick your arm down his throat as far as you can. He can't bite you then. If he goes for one of us, grab him by the tail and throw him to the other end of the room, and throw him hard!

"Meanwhile, you, Asher, swallow that turtle-stew as fast as Heaven will let you. Understand? Quick, man! He has lifted the tureen-cover already!"

As in a horrid dream, the two men followed the dauntless Thornton in single file. It seemed a journey of miles across the parquet-floor; Strang could not bring himself to realize that they were more than a harmless party of tipplers who, after a final high-ball, were peacefully making their way to the street.

Then, in a flash, there were things doing.

Thornton had turned, and with a powerful yank had dragged the amazed politician backwards to the floor.

The latter, in a wild effort to save himself, clutched the table-cloth, and fell amid a hideous ruin of plate and china; and even as Asher, with protruding eyeballs, made a frenzied dash to save the tureen, it tottered and fell, spilling its precious contents on the floor.

Instantly the bulldog, which had preserved an air of stolid indifference, blinking sleepily at the agitated Strang, who feinted at it with his napkin bandaged arm—wondering how on earth he was to withdraw it once he had thrust it down the animal's throat—awoke to life.

With a single movement, one comprehensive lap of its huge red tongue, one gulp, it devoured the last morsel of green turtle.

There was left, so Asher afterward declared, not so much as a grease spot on the floor.

"Beat it!" he bawled, making for the door.

Thornton, struggling valiantly with the powerful and enraged stranger, beheld the one for whom he was risking everything, making an ignoble retreat; beheld also a number of waiters bearing down on them; beheld Strang waver, then follow Asher.

It was the psychological moment for a retrograde movement. In the nick of time Thornton freed himself from the clutch of the dog-faced man, eluded three waiters, and tore down the street after his fleeing companions, pursued by the electric-cab, whose chauffeur beheld his vanishing fares with profane disgust.

Presently the cab overtook them, and Thornton bundled his forces within, and bade the chaffeur drive on as rapidly as possible.

"Asher, you are a quitter!" he panted bitterly; "a rank quitter!"

"Nothing of the sort!" protested the latter with indignation. "Didn't you see that the blamed dog ate up every bit before I could save the tureen?"

The chauffeur had come to a stop, and Thornton alighted.

"I have got to think," he announced. "It is half-past five; I am going to ride outside, and, perhaps, in the cool morning air I may get an inspiration."

And he sprang on the front seat, and directed the chauffeur to drive anywhere, on first speed.

A moment later—so it seemed to Asher, who with Strang had fallen promptly asleep—but in reality at half-past six, Thornton was shaking Asher roughly by the shoulder.

"What's the matter?" grumbled the latter in bewilderment, passing a hand across his aching head.

"Asher," said Thornton, disregarding his query, "was there anything in the terms of your bet barring canned turtle, if genuine?"

"No," confessed Asher, after a pause.

A solitary patron occupied a central table

"Idiot that I have been! I could have laid in a case, couldn't I, as well as not? Unless that blamed Faraway has cornered the canned goods, too!"

"The cleverest men make slips," said Thornton. "That's all. Go to sleep again."

And the cab rolled swiftly on.

But Asher slept no more. Instead, he invented derisive and profane epithets which he hurled at himself, until the cab drew up before a huge building in the mercantile district.

Peering out, Asher read in letters a yard high over the mighty entrance, "Howe & Tilton," and recognized the firm name of one of the principal grocery concerns in New York.

Presently Thornton was tapping on the glass window, and evidently signaling to some one within; after a time he drew something from his pocket, held it up to the window, and nodded encouragingly.

After a season came the creaking of reluctant bolts, the swinging of iron gates, and there emerged a red faced night-porter.

A mysterious colloquy ensued. The red faced man disappeared; the nucleus of a crowd began to collect, and Thornton gazed anxiously down the street. In the distance a sauntering policeman slightly quickened his pace.

Again the red faced man appeared, and thrust into Thornton's hands some object which the latter dropped hastily into his coat-pocket; instantly the gates closed, the red faced man vanished, the bolts shot back, and the cab whirled away again.

Then, through the speaking-tube came the voice of Thornton.

"It's all right; I have the goods!"

Not until they drew up at Strang's lodgings did Thornton explain. Asher paid a ruinous sum to the chauffeur, and dismissed him.

At quarter-past seven they entered Strang's library, and Thornton ordered him to start the chafing-dish.

"I had to pay the night watchman ten dollars, and promise to look out for him if he was fired," he said. "Then he reluctantly fetched me this."

And he dived into his pocket, drew forth a cylindrical can, and tossed it to Asher.

The latter read the label, uttered a lamentable cry, and held it up to the other's horrified gaze. It read plainly: "Mock Turtle Soup."

"That red headed idiot!" roared Thornton. "I was so anxious to get away that I never stopped to examine it! And the store does not open till eight. We have dismissed the cab, and it is too late anyhow to go back for another can, as your bet is off in three-quarters of an hour.

"Well, Asher, I am devilish sorry. Did all I could, and I have a head like a water-pail, and a can of mock-turtle to show for it!"

He laughed mirthlessly, and lighted a cigaret with fingers that trembled from weariness.

Asher pulled himself together with a jerk, and came over to where he was sitting, a disconsolate huddle of defeat.

"My hand, old man," he said, "and yours, too, Strang. You fellows have been more than white to me, and I shall never forget it as long as I live. You thought of fifty things that would never have occurred to me, and a dozen times we have been on the brink of success, only to lose by the merest chance.

"Now, I want you two to do me one last favor; it is only fair that you come and see what it is I have played for and lost. I don't mean the money; but the girl. Then you will know that it was worth while taking all this trouble. She gives a studio-breakfast this very morning, at eight; Faraway is sure to be there, and some others, of course. I have a standing invitation; everything is quite informal, I assure you. Will you come?"

Thornton and Strang both felt that it would top off the night's adventures, and felt some natural curiosity to see the lady whose knights-errant they had been, unknown to her.

Strang telephoned for a cab, and while it was coming, the three men put their heads under the cold-water tap, arrayed themselves in some fresh shirts of Strang's, and drank a pick-up he mixed for them.

On the way to the studio Thornton hailed a street vendor, and bought an armful of flowers.

At just a quarter to eight they were tramping up the long flights leading to the airy perch of Miss Floretta, wondering where they found the strength for his last feat of courage and endurance.

Hers was a typical studio: an enormous room, with casts and sketches hung on the bare walls, a few big chests, ill-assorted chairs, rugs, old brass, a rickety table or so, a screened corner, some half-completed clay models, and in the far corner a mass of clay covered with a damp cloth.

But chiefly, there was Miss Floretta, in a big studio-apron, eyes sparkling, lips smiling, a huge spoon in one hand, and a steaming chafing-dish before her.

She was trying to manage the latter, oversee the making of some French coffee by a pretty but helpless assistant at her side, and converse with some dozen guests, all at once, with astonishing success.

She found time to welcome the new arrivals prettily, without letting the coffee-pot or the chafing-dish get the better of her or losing the thread of her badinage with the rest; and she applauded Strang and Thornton for their chivalry in rising at such an early hour to do her honor.

In the corner sat Faraway, languid, immaculate, a little bored, but undoubtedly interested in the arrival of Asher and his friends.

And there was a handful of melancholy minor poets, young artists, and pretty girls.

Thornton took keen delight in the aroma of the coffee, and in watching the

Asher, with a cry, had flung himself upon the chafing-dish

dainty little studio-mistress. Especially he fancied her fashion of thrusting out one small, pink thumb when gesturing; a trick caught from her modeling, he imagined. Her smile was peculiarly restful, and her manner quite unspoiled.

A casual inspection of the casts scattered about did not quite bear out Asher's eulogiums, he thought, although some of them were not really bad.

His dreamy reflections were interrupted by Asher, who rose with the sudden stiffness of an automatom, sniffing the air, and with eyes glaring like a maniac's.

"'Retta!" he cried, in a hoarse, unnatural voice, "what is it you are cooking in that chafing-dish?"

"That's a secret!" she laughed back at him, challenging him with two disconcerting dimples.

"But please tell me, 'Retta," he insisted, moving towards the table, "else I shall look for myself!"

"How rude of you!" she pouted; "and the others would be so jealous as I have refused to tell any of them, and they are all dreadfully curious, aren't you all?"

She appealed to the company generally.

"We are!" they answered back, like a Greek chorus.

"However," she relented, "it is almost done now, and I don't mind telling you. Not you in particular, Mr. Curious," she wrinkled her nose at Asher, "but all of you. You are going to have a great treat.

"How many of you know that in all New York it is impossible to get green turtle this month? Well, by the merest luck, I found some in the Café Rospigliosi yesterday; and I bought it for you precious epicures!

"Think! Not a millionaire in the city can have what I am serving to you! I know it is funny for breakfast, but I am cooking it *a la—*"

She paused, for Asher, with a strange croaking cry had flung himself upon the chafing-dish, and, seizing the lid, sent it skinning across the studio like a discus, where it neatly removed the nose of a rather pretty Psyche, and fell with a great clatter against the wall.

Then—and with his fingers—he began to cram the cruelly hot morsels of turtle into his mouth, and swallow them with strange, sobbing groans of joyful misery.

And even as the last of them disappeared down his seared and aching throat, the clock of a neighboring church about on a level with the studio boomed out the hour of eight.

Faraway rose splendidly to the occasion. He sauntered tranquilly across to where Asher stood, and offered his hand.

"Good finish, Asher," he drawled. "Deucedly dramatic, too; climax, and all that. Don't forget to drop around to-day; the rest will be a mere formality. I have no doubt you have won out. Rather fancy I gave you a jolly good run for your money, though? You are a plucky fellow, although your table manners are the worst I ever have seen!"

As for little Miss Floretta, her indignation was really thrilling. The brutal, unpardonable assault of poor Asher upon her cherished breakfast amazed and disgusted her beyond the power of mere words to express. All that she had in her feminine arsenal beyond words, however, she trained upon the wretched youth.

"It really doesn't look as if the poor devil could ever square himself," Thornton said pityingly to Strang.

He evidently did, however, for the latter received an invitation to their wedding one day when Thornton had dropped into Strang's place for a smoke and a chat.

"Here's one for you, too," he said. "They enclosed it with mine, as no one knows your address. I doubt if you have one!"

"Well, it wasn't quite my idea of an adventure," Thornton remarked after a pause.

"An adventure should follow certain rules as strictly as does a short-story. It should be centralized in time and place, it should move by regular stages to a logical if unexpected climax; extraneous matter should be excised. Now, our adventure was altogether too episodic; there were too many loose ends—and far too many drinks! We shall have to call the bet off, and try again!"

"Well, as for me," said Strang, "if

things like this can happen right here in little old New York, Bagdad and Smyrna can go hang for all me!

"And by the way, Thornton, do you remember the little girl with blue eyes and an old gold frock who was helping make that good coffee at the studio-breakfast?"

Thornton flicked the ash from his cigaret.

"Poor old Billy!" he sighed. "And your bachelor-quarters are so devilish comfortable, too!"

The Result

BY FREDERICK ORIN BARTLETT

ILLUSTRATED BY GAYLE PORTER HOSKINS

I.

DICKINSON, standing there in the library before the girl who trembled in the shadows, knew that here was a picture fated to be burned into his brain for all time. It marked one of the most important crises in his life. And so, with that absurd capacity for detail which men have at moments of great tension, his eyes once again swept the familiar surroundings, now half dusk-hidden. There was scarcely an article which was not in some way connected with a picture of the girl who was now shrinking from him into the folds of the heavy curtains by the window.

At one side of the big oak table she had stood when first they knew, although he had not yet spoken; in one corner of the deep window-seat she had sat, curled up like a kitten, while both marveled at the new meaning they read into the poets; at the heavy book-case running the length of one side, they had searched for books together, and their hands had met by accident, leaving them staring at one another, big-eyed; at the entrance-door, now looking like a dark, cave-mouth, he had often seen her framed at parting, carrying the picture with him on the walk home and cherishing it to give him strength on the day of bitter strife following. At the window where he now stood, sensing rather than seeing the lights which pricked the dark over the river, they had often stood side by side, marveling at the crimson slits in the purple, opening to the burning gold.

"It's Cæsar dying," he had once said laughingly; "stabbed through his royal robes to his hot heart."

And after that she had always used the conceit in speaking of a sunset, after a manner that pleases men.

It took but a minute for all these things and many others, to zigzag, lightning-fashion, through his brain. Now, with a nervous twitching back of his shoulders, he turned again to the girl.

"Perhaps," he suggested tenderly, "if you thought it over—"

"But what is there to think over?" she asked, almost pleadingly. Her voice had in it something of the richness, but not the firmness, of a Jacqueminot rose.

"There is myself," he prompted.

"Oh Billy—Billy, it is all you. If—if only those things were not true. If they were only half true."

"At least," he returned, almost with harshness, "I am not a liar. Every fact your father told you, I told him. It is all true; there is not a thing that young blood does, that I've not done. Even," he shuddered, "even that yachting-party is true."

She came forward a little at that.

"And yet you've dared come to me—dared speak to me of—of love?"

"Yes, Ruth."

There, as always, he stood firmly before her, now scarcely more than a silhouette, yet still an impassable barrier,

For a moment she faced him, her blood running hot, and then the old, pitiable weakness returning, she sank back into her refuge in the shadows.

"It's too horrible," she moaned, "too horrible."

His heart ached for her, the more so that he knew he himself caused the pain. her—a result which, while not yet perfect, had steadily gained in strength until it now stood confident. So, although struggling against what he knew deep in his heart was inevitable, he was still driven to make a last effort.

"Ruth," he asked, "will you come out here where I may see your eyes?"

"Perhaps!" he suggested, "if you thought it over"

He understood her point of view and felt the sting of it. But it seemed too bad that he could make her understand nothing of his—those years of struggle alone with a nature which, while tending to great things, had fallen to petty ones. How could he expect her to see when even her father, the unimpassioned judge, who never knew what it meant to feel a lusty impulse, was blind? He wanted to make her see that it was the result of all those years he was offering

She did not move nor look up at him.

"Perhaps it is best," he went on after a minute, "for it isn't to the eyes I wish to talk now. The eyes reflect the real You—the You I love. If they were all, I'd not need to explain."

"It is quite useless to explain anyway," she interrupted. "All you can possibly do is to deny."

He thought a moment over this, and then went on, spurred by his original necessity. He spoke judicially, but with an

earnestness which was vividly expressed in the way he unconsciously leaned over her.

"When I said the facts were true, I admitted what, to a part of You, and to most of the world, was conclusive. And that is not to be wondered at. We judge people by their acts—their bad acts mostly—because we are not omniscient and haven't the time to judge them any other way. If a man steals, he's a thief; if a man kills, he's a murderer. Generally, it's true, but it isn't always."

"But," she broke in, "there are some things—"

"There is no act—not one—by which, in itself, one may with sureness judge fairly. You judge me; but what does my life mean to you—those long years I have been out there among men, meeting—not bold problems, but insiduous problems that don't show their grinning faces to you till the end? What do you know now, more than I knew at first, of primal passions that grip you unawares in the face of opportunity? What do you know, and what can I tell you, of what things sheer, robust life leads a man to do?"

He checked himself. And the girl, watching him straighten and move his handkerchief across his brow, said so low that he scarce heard:

"But, Billy, a man's instincts ought to be sufficient."

"Instincts? Instincts?" he repeated. "Only a woman has instincts; a woman who doesn't know. And they even play *her* false."

It may have been pride that stopped him; a dislike to argue this because it made of him something of a pleader.

"Oh, Ruth," he resumed, as if tired, "there are some things in life that just happen wrong. And all we can do is to bow our heads. At heart they are all right—they were meant to be all right—but they just don't come out. It's like working on a problem in algebra, where you know the answer but can't get it. I don't believe I should love you as I do, unless you, in some way, were meant for me. I couldn't, you know. It couldn't have come unless my life had been just what it has. And now because of that—"

He heard a stifled sob.

"No, dear," he hurried on, "it isn't your fault. Your heart is mine even now, but there is something else, something back of your heart—between your heart and your soul—which is like a blind and deaf old jailer who refuses to give up the key. He has worked for your father, your grandfather, and your great-grandfather."

He was almost smiling, as one will at the oddities which suggest themselves at such moments.

"Billy," she sobbed, "you are cruel. You have been cruel from the first. No," she hurried on, as she withdrew from the tender hand which he placed on her shoulder, "no, not meaning it. But in your blundering man-fashion, you've been cruel."

He stepped back to the window.

"Well," he said, "it is cruel, anyway, to talk more of this. Your father said I might see you this last time, and I took his favor and yours, though I knew it would be quite useless. So now," he said, "Good-by."

Without moving, he held out his hand so that she must come to his side, if she would take it. She came.

"It seems too bad," she stammered, "that we shouldn't be friends."

"Would you have me for a friend?" he asked quickly.

"Yes," she answered, "somehow I can't help that."

"No," he went on, "that would be a paradox. And besides, you are always going to be more to me than that. I'm going out of your life for a little while—perhaps for a long while—but I'm coming back. I'm going to fight again. Sometimes I'll win and sometimes I'll lose, but each time I'll come out a better man. So that in the end, when I come to you once more with the result, it will be better worth. And it is only the result which counts. And I shall pray—for I do pray, you know—that you, too, may learn a little—something of the possibilities within you—even though it will hurt. Good-by."

She took his hand, scarcely as yet grasping the significance of it all. Then he melted into the shadows of the doorway.

She cuddled her cheek against his head

At the foot of the stairs, he met her father. The latter greeted him coldly, but with a certain pride.

"It was quite useless, wasn't it?" he demanded.

"Oh, yes, thank you," answered Dickinson, "quite."

"I thought I could trust the girl."

"Yes, you can do that."

He added as he turned to go out, "So can I."

II.

The days lounged by inexorably, through the Summer to the late Fall. From time to time Ruth heard of Dickinson, through common friends or the medium of the newspapers, where he figured more or less prominently in connection with several law-cases. The reports spoke with considerable flattery of his brilliant prospects, and even hinted that he was a possible future candidate for mayor.

"He is of the aggressive type," read one article, "a type we need to shake down some of the dust which has gathered on the rafters of the City Hall. Few young men in the city have had a more creditable record."

A phrase like this was sufficient once again to set her brain in travail. Before men he manifestly stood well, and it could not be because they were ignorant of these pitiful early episodes. It must be, she reasoned, because the average man was blunted to the finer standards of life, save a few keen souls like her father. And yet, when she was frank with herself, she perforce admitted that even she had not, because of those things, lost interest in him. She had still committed the paradox of wishing him for a friend. It was as if an iron gate, for which neither was responsible, had been thrust between, leaving her still to hunger for him barred out.

The most she had been able to do was to take his absence for granted. Her life had sunk into a deadly monotony of routine, which refused to be broken even by the Summer-vacation. The outside world, where he toiled on, seemed to her as vast as the spaces between the stars. Again and again, she awoke at night, generally towards the dawn, moaning,

"Why couldn't it have been different! Why couldn't it have been!"

That was the point; she couldn't accept him as he was (though it was that *he* she loved) but must needs go back to her old premises and deduce a creature of her own logic who, while still in the form of Dickinson, was not at all the man himself. The pity of it all was, that she had been forced to see a man in the making.

During the last few months, she had turned, in sheer *ennui,* to young Blake, son of her father's old friend, Blake of the Consolidated Iron Works. They had been brought up together from dancing-school, and she had thought him a mere youngster until he had returned that Fall from a trip abroad at the end of his college-course. It was the feeling that she knew him quite thoroughly, after those years, that appealed to her more than anything else. And yet, it is quite sure, that had she met him now for the first time she would not have liked him. There was a certain shiftiness to his nature and a touch of the feminine, to which her sight was now dulled by the past. As for the rest, he was a handsome, agreeable enough fellow who fell readily into a type.

As time went on, however, and his attentions became more persistent and more obvious, she drew back almost in fear. He had furnished her relief, but her emotions towards him were, at best, only passive, and, at worst, had a touch of repugnance.

This, in turn, worried her. She began to think herself queer—an attitude she despised. Her pet idea was normality, and normality as she conceived it to be, had no such quirks of passion.

When he had gone this evening, after a demonstrative leave-taking, which, while not absolutely committal, left no reasonable doubt, she sank back in her chair exhausted. This alternative of marrying someone else had never occurred to her. It seemed as impossible as that *he* should ever marry. She felt the need of someone else, the biting need of a mother, and as her eyes began to fill, stole down-stairs to seek comfort of her father.

Pausing at the study-door, she saw him with his bowed head sunken upon his papers, as if in sleep. Beneath the lamp-light, his hair looked very white.

"Poor dad," she murmured, "he has been working so hard."

She crept up to him from behind and cuddled her cheek against his head. He started nervously and glanced up with anxious eyes. But he recovered himself quickly and drawing her to him, kissed her.

"Has Bob gone?" he asked tenderly.

"Yes," she answered with a little sigh of relief, "and I'm glad of it."

"Bob is a nice boy—a nice boy."

"I think he is, dad, but—well, sometimes he's too nice."

"Couldn't be too nice for you, girlie."

He patted her hand, gazing abstr ctedly across the room. His fingers f mbled about among his papers and fin lly settled to the task of turning down a ·r-ner of foolscap, smoothing it out, and turning it down again.

"I was hoping—" he began.

She jumped the ellipsis as only a maiden, in these matters, can.

"No, dad," she cooed laughingly, "you can't get rid of me that way."

He took her hand, smoothing the back of it. He spoke more seriously.

"He is a good boy, Ruth."

"Yes, dad," she answered.

"And if you could—why, things haven't been going very well with me lately."

"Poor daddy."

He turned his head a bit to one side.

"I've been unfortunate and—unwise. I've lost a great deal of money and now things are beginning to press."

"But what has that to do with the other?"

His voice sank lower. Come to word it, it did sound ignoble.

"Oh, if I could only make you understand. I have borrowed of Blake—borrowed of Blake. Unless something happens, I shall be bankrupt — ruined. But it isn't that—it's the judgeship. That will go."

The girl paled. She saw the thing he meant, the thing he wished, but somehow she didn't connect it with him. It seemed more like a decree of Fate. Sitting there on the chair-arm, she mechanically smoothed the back of his head. Her thoughts wandered, but the main point pressed in like sword-steel.

Frightened by the death-mask he had made of his daughter's face, he took her in his arms, running on excitedly, but she heard nothing save that which burned her cheeks.

And yet, two weeks later, Dickinson read in a morning-paper, the news of her engagement. It was the day he had heard an ugly rumor about the judge. He locked his office-door and spent the rest of the day in a private investigation which had nothing whatever to do with his law-practice. That evening he called at the home of Judge Bailey, and was admitted to the man's study without the usual formality of presenting a card. In the hall, he had noticed an extra hat and coat.

Dickinson, seeing things as clearly as he did, was brutal in his directness. As the old man rose in astonishment at the intrusion, Dickinson sat down awkwardly, his hat still in his hands.

"So," he began, "you've sold the girl. That's worse than selling yourself."

The judge turned livid. Steadying himself by the table, he blurted out:

"You young rascal! You—you dare insult me this way in my own house!"

Dickinson was remarkably cool— dangerously cool.

"It *is* something of an insult," he agreed. "I'm glad you can see it that way."

The older man had taken a step forward, but in the face of such a situation as this, he didn't know what to do.

"Sit down," suggested Dickinson.

The judge obeyed.

"I've learned the whole business," the young man went on, "from beginning to end: your part, the girl's part, and Blake's part. If I had done what you have done in your business, do you know what you would call me—thief! But I don't call you that. Thank God, I can see how it all came about, step by step. You risked, to get gold for your daughter. That was noble. Now you plan to spoil it all. But the primal impulse was there, and I admire you for that."

Seizing the arms of his chair, the judge drew himself up.

"I—I refuse to listen to you further. Leave my house."

There was some dignity to it, but Dickinson crossed the room and the man sank back into his chair before the light he saw in the eyes fixed upon him.

Facing him, Dickinson resumed.

"But that part isn't my affair. So far as it shows you human, I'm rather glad of it. But the other—the way you try to crawl out of it, is. And it isn't between you as Judge Bailey and me as William Dickinson; it isn't even a question between you as a father, and me as a lover of your daughter: it's just between plain you as a man, and plain me as a man. It's just a question of justice."

He paused for a moment. His sole idea was to make himself clear in as few words as possible.

"You ought to understand that word, and if you do, you'll not try to dig up petty motives for my action. But you will. I don't know how well you know Blake, Jr. At least I'm giving you credit for not knowing one essential episode in his life; so I'm going to tell you.

"If I had done what you have done, do you know what you would call me?"

"Blake and I spent one Summer in the same hotel in the mountains. He was a guest and I was waiting on table for the money to finish my course. I served him and a young woman with her husband who sat next to him. The husband was a careless, good-natured, decent fellow, and the wife was pretty. Blake made love to her and she, startled by the novelty of the thing, listened. Blake persisted, and her weak nature crumbled. Mark you, it was not the work of a day or so, but the campaign of a Summer. After the first, when it was too late, she fought. They used to sit alone there in the dining-room, after the other guests had gone, and I heard. She fought hard. There was nothing of hot blood in it to excuse Blake. His fun came in watching the struggle. In the end, she agreed to elope with him one night. The husband heard of it, and like many an easy nature in a crisis, he turned to steel and bade her go. But Blake ran. So, you see, he hadn't the opportunity to commit a legal crime. He is spotless that way. He ran. The woman, afterwards—" He shrugged his shoulders—"They say it was *her* fault.

"Now, it isn't a fact that he stole her love. Even that could be explained after a fashion; but, afterwards, he didn't shoulder it. He didn't fight it out and grow through it. He didn't play the man, but foisted it all off on the woman. You see, he was a coward; and that was enough to show up the yellow soul of him. You understand? It wasn't the making love to the woman, but the way he handled it afterwards."

He paused.

"Do you see?" he asked almost anxiously.

The judge tried again to rise from his chair, but this time Dickinson pressed him back—gently but firmly.

"Leave — leave my house," cried the old man.

"So the question now is: Who is to tell Ruth of this, as she was told of me —you or I? The girl has got to know: for her sake, for your sake, and for my sake."

Judge Bailey was breathing heavily. Dickinson studied him a moment and then removed his coat. He placed it carefully over a chair.

"All right," he said, "I'll tell her. It is better so. But it's bad, isn't it, sir? Bad for us all. No—" he put out his hand as the judge started as if to follow him, "don't be unwise, sir. I'm back against a wall and I'm going to do a very disagreeable thing."

The old man stared stupidly at the retreating figure.

III.

Dickinson found them in the same old room. The girl met him with frightened eyes; the man with flushed cheeks. He nodded to the girl and faced Blake.

"I've come," he said, with that same uncanny directness, "I've come to tell Ruth about you. Unless," he paused "you wish to tell her yourself."

The young man sickened, knowing well what was meant.

"Do you?" asked Dickinson.

"Wh—what do you mean?"

"You know. About the girl you left to fight it out alone."

For a moment, what force there was in Blake asserted itself. He advanced with clenched fists. Then stopped.

"You're a fine fellow to throw mud. There's an old adage, you know—"

"Yes, I remember. But Ruth knows all my story, and she doesn't know yours."

"I see. There's another adage," leered Blake, "about a dog in a manger."

Dickinson held himself in control remarkably well. The lust to strike was hot within him. It was again the fact that he looked upon himself quite impersonally in this matter that gave him strength.

"It's going to be difficult to make you understand," he resumed, "but really there *is* a difference between us—even in those things. It isn't what you did first, it is what you did afterwards. It isn't what you were, it's what you are. Under similar circumstances, you'd do it all over again. I wouldn't."

It was Ruth who interrupted.

"Billy—Mr. Dickinson—this is an insult."

His voice, as he turned to her, was almost a caress.

"No, it isn't that, Ruth. It's a nasty scene, but if you're fair you'll listen to me."

He faced Blake again, and the girl, held as by a spell, retreated to the shadows and watched it all with pounding heart.

"Shall you tell it or shall I?"

"You have no right! I refuse to listen!"

But Dickinson pushed him, too, back into a chair, and standing before him repeated the story once again. When he had finished, he asked:

"Is it true?"

"It's a lie. It wasn't my fault, she—"

Dickinson placed his hand heavily on the latter's shoulder, and as the boy weakened with the shame of being manhandled, he repeated:

"Is it all true, Blake?"

Cringing lower, the boy sobbed with hate.

"Yes, if you want it."

"May he go now, Ruth?"

In fear, the girl nodded, and Blake stumbled out with murder in his heart.

It was then that Dickinson felt the

reaction. His knees weakened and his head throbbed, but he braced himself.

"I'm sorry, Ruth, but it was the only thing to do, wasn't it?"

She did not answer.

"And now, I'll just tell you this, and go. Your father's affairs are in something of a mess; but if he will only face them squarely, they'll come out all right. He's been—unwise, but he has learned—as we all learn if there is any good in us. If he wants my help, I'll be glad to give it to him."

There was no reply.

"Good-by," he said, and moved from the room.

The girl saw him leave as one does in a nightmare, powerless to stay him. It was, as from a nightmare, she awoke to find herself calling his name.

"Billy! Billy!"

He came back up the stairs two at a time and met her startled, tear-stained face.

"And if *I* want your help?" she trembled.

"I feel that I have lived to fit myself for that alone," he answered.

"Then must I ask for it?"

"Not with your lips," he replied, "but with your heart and soul you must ask for it."

She hid her face for a moment, for a maiden's pride is strong; but when she looked up again, he saw what he had so long hungered for.

"Billy, I have done worse than you, but now I know. You have lived for me—you have learned for me, and suffered for me. You—"

But he checked her, drawing her to his side and after she had sobbed out her agony, he spoke.

"Ruth."

"Yes, Billy."

"Here is something I say over to myself. Do you wish to say it?"

"Yes, Billy."

"God preserve in us a tendency for good—just that, a *tendency* for good."

She repeated it.

"And now," he concluded, with a great sigh of relief, "we'd better go down to see your father. It's going to be an awful job to make him see big, because there is no love in his heart."

His bowed head upon his papers

The Cog

BY REM. A. JOHNSTON

THE conversation came up during the moment of pause that sometimes happens in a large office when, business over, old friend halts for a word with old friend before going out.

"It is not easy to talk about weaknesses," Gregory continued, as he folded away certain papers that he had come across the city to get, "but every one has them. Take that man of yours at the desk yonder—that fellow with gray hair and pasty face. He's weak—he's been strong, but he's weak now."

The Head of Sprang & Sprang turned to the speaker with a laugh of glee.

"You're almost always right, Gregory, but to-day the brand you've been smoking gives you away. That man is the best and the oldest in the office."

"Just so," answered Gregory eagerly. "He's been faithful for years, and he's worked along without a word of complaint—without a thought of complaint, may be. He's always been valuable to Sprang & Sprang, more valuable than he ever guessed or you ever realized. That is the type he belongs to. And it goes without saying, he has never known how he has been crowded. I might also add he is of the type that has always had some dread or weakness to fight, and a time will befall when the devil comes out in the open and makes a scrap for the man. Of course he will break—the load crushes such as he—and of course the misery of it will bring on a reaction. Help him to save himself when the time comes. That sort saved are the men who are worth while. Looking at him, if I know anything of human nature, I guess he's at the ragged edge of life right now. He'll be waking up to bring you and himself and his family trouble."

"Foster has made a good salary—that is, as good a salary as can be paid for the kind of work he does," commented Sprang helplessly.

"It isn't salary," Gregory retorted, "and you know it. It is something vastly different. He's a cog in the wheel—nothing more—and he is ground, ground, ground, without rest and without much hope of rest. Being of good material he will stand it for years. But all at once he will realize he is only a cog. When that happens—remember what he's been to you. Don't make it a common case. Give him his ninety days of Hades—let him plunge. Then he'll come back satisfied and die in the harness."

Sprang fiddled with a blotter on his desk a moment before he laughed.

"Beware the Ides, eh? You must suppose we work men to death. You'll be saying that Sprang & Sprang do not give their men vacations."

"That isn't the point at all. Say, Dave," said Gregory leaning forward—his eyes had been fixed on Foster for some minutes—"that fellow never takes his vacations. Now, does he? And he has been too loyal to become a union-sympathizer, and he'll give you anything you ask of him. He's a mere automaton. And you can't help it. It isn't your fault. It isn't anybody's fault in particular. It's just one of the sins of the System—a modern life-and-labor problem in an over-crowded center. It's the result of aggregation — largely. If I were a preacher I'd go out and preach segregation as a cure for every ill under the sun. If men went on unjustified strikes I'd send them to the country—I'd buy them ranches and cattle. I'd have them bankers and clerks and storekeepers in little two-by-four towns all over the United States. Your man Foster—he came from the farm a quarter of a century ago, I dare say, and I believe, this very moment, he's longing to get back—to get away from the work that is killing him."

The Head rubbed his nose meditatively. Gregory's eye was keen, even though his theories were always combative. Now that he came to think of it, Foster did

seem to be sort of overworked. He had been an exceptionally faithful Foster, but then it was the business of employees to be faithful to the source of their bread and butter. The question of their physical and mental health had never bothered him before. Just now, however, barring Gregory's temperamental peculiarities, he thought he could see how he was partly right. Evidently Foster was weakening under the steadily increasing load of business-cares that fell upon him.

"Mr. Foster," he called.

"Yes, sir?"

Foster obeyed the summons with all his customary alacrity. He was as quick on his feet as ever. There was no hesitancy in his movement, no lingering before responding. His face, though lined and worked down to the immobility of the perfect office-drudge, brightened with its usual anxiety at the call of the Head.

"Mr. Foster, did you finish that matter with the Royal people yesterday? It was important."

The agonized amazement, surprise, shame on Foster's face was sufficient answer. He reddened, dropped his head; his fingers worked slightly. He looked at Gregory inquiringly, then around the office hopelessly.

"I did not, sir," he answered finally. And, dismissed by a gesture, he returned to his desk.

"You see," remarked Gregory, under his breath, "he is dead tired. He forgot. That's all—he simply forgot. To forget in a business like this is a mighty serious thing—but flesh and blood cannot endure forever. As a favor to your own business that needs him, I ask you to be gentle with him for the sake of the past, and as a favor to the man, I plead that his faults may be condoned—for he's worth saving, Dave. Being a drudge year in and year out has been responsible for all of this."

Sprang turned with an irritated shrug to his letter-cabinet. He and Gregory were old friends, who always spoke their minds on intimate matters and never hesitated to criticise rather closely those things which with most men are considered a little too personal to be freely talked of. He could not tell why he was angered. Possibly he, too, was a worn-out machine, acting according to a law quite as fixed and unreasonable as the one controlling the destinies of his men. For a few moments both looked out of the windows at the well-like walls that shut them in. Foster sat at his desk thinking drearily.

Foster was tired—tired of the endless grind, the nights of restless, disturbed slumber, the hurried newspaper and scalding coffee at breakfast, the sprint for the elevated at 7:30, the long, deadly, wearying day, punctuated by an indigestible luncheon, the merciless crush at 5:30, the car-strap home—tired of it all, with the finality of one dying in the galley. And exactly like one dying in the galley, memory gave up his past in limitless detail. He could think a great deal now because his home-cares were few, his wife having taken her children and herself away for the summer's rest.

Twenty-five years ago he had come up from a backwoods' village, as thousands of young men do, to barter youth and strength for the hurrying crowds and the shackles of money-hungry maniacs. Now, he realized that the devil had gotten the best of the bargain. All he had given up flashed vividly before him. He had traded the burning, raw gold of lost sunsets, ever gleaming wheat-fields, and the whisper of little breezes in the corn for the glare of gray pavements and the airless heat of August in Sprang & Sprang's offices. In detached fragments of moments he marked cows coming up grassy lanes, children knee-deep in clover, country roads twisting village-ward between miles and miles of wood and meadow, swallows wheeling in the air above the old church steeple, women gossiping in the dooryards—back home.

He had left this, never returning even for a visit, goaded by adolescent ambitions—ambitions that slowly evaporated as his future became more and more inexorably determined and inevitably forecast—left it at an age when adjustment to urban conditions is almost never possible. A boy can forget; a man can adapt himself. Foster had been neither boy nor man—he could neither forget nor adapt

when he sought his fortune in the city.

Here was where the weakness in his character made itself manifest. In spite of his will there had never been a moment when he had not longed to go back, to immerse himself in the simple life that had satisfied his fathers. There had never been a time when he had not realized that he dared not go back—even for a day's visit—lest he become inseparably one with those in the open. Here he could endure; there he must yield.

So, in spite of the yearning, and because he had no kin, he resisted the desire of his heart and played what he conceived to be the part of a man.

But, oh, the longing to get back home—to the old life of his childhood, to the woods and meadows—this had drained his resolution for twenty-five years. And lately, it had been putting strange fancies into his brain, maddening him, unaccountably intruding upon his clean, careful work, committing him to a thousand mistakes. And sometimes a rush of weakness would come over him until it seemed that he must run away—away from home, business, obligations of all kinds—away back There!

The last few weeks this obsession had threatened him almost continually. It had interfered with important business-transactions, shunting his will off the track, deposing his ordinarily healthy reason.

Yesterday he had forgotten to put through the Royal work. He remembered quite well that he had been thinking of the way he and the Haines boy had made a rope-ladder some thirty years ago. And he had dismissed the English solicitor in an abstracted manner which precluded the favor about to be extended to the firm.

It is true that, heretofore, his life had flowed along pretty easily. He had set himself to advance; he had advanced in a measure, now a necessary subordinate, a husband and father, a good churchman, a recognized star in their little circle of friends, he perceived that he had done some of the things he had promised himself to do. But always the shadow had dogged him, always it had urged him to throw the present life and its obligations aside, and, so, sink into the oblivion that follows man's greatest sin against society—disappearance from it.

He was aging. Already he had won the distinction of being the oldest young-man in the office. He must go on at this rate with a life in a six roomed flat eternally before him, week after week, year in and year out, until he should die and the life-insurance people create an estate for him.

The office was always full of men. Today there was a smooth-faced one with a good, strong, benevolent brow talking to Sprang. In the intervals between making out vouchers and checking off important invoices he could watch him. It made him feel better to look at him. Some men have this power. Sprang hadn't—not this one—the elder Sprang had possessed it, but he had been dead these five years.

"Yes, sir?"

And the Head had reprimanded him—the first time in his business-life. That gesture of dismissal was a reprimand. This was the straw!

Foster arose suddenly. He pulled down the top of his desk with customary precision, but did not glance towards the Head at all, nor did he see that Gregory was watching him keenly, sadly. He stepped into the cloak-room, then into the corridor. He felt exactly as if something in his brain had snapped, freeing him from untold tons of weight that he had been carrying about, Ajax-like, from the beginning. With the turning off of the tension the responsibility ceased. When he looked at his watch he found that it was only 3 o'clock. However, that did not matter. He paid no attention to this but went directly to the elevator. In a moment he had mixed with the mob in the street.

Some of this Gregory saw and understood.

"Your man has gone, Sprang," he said. "Never heard of anything like it, eh? 'Phone me in the morning. He wont be coming back."

And in the morning Sprang did call Gregory.

"I couldn't see it your way," he admitted, "but—the poor devil has really

left us. There is no trace. Books all right, everything plumb so far as his work goes. But nobody knows where he is."

The wire said distinctly: "It's the fault of the System, Dave. That fellow broke—broke like a trotting-horse on a heavy track, forced out of his stride. Doctors have names for the thing. I haven't. Just be gentle. You will say it is poor business-talk, but, nevertheless, Twentieth century progress will have to adjust itself to conditions that fit human necessity. A machine is just so strong; man is the same. We must have a broader code of ethics to mix in with the exigencies of the hour."

Sprang hung up the receiver.

"Percy," he said to one of the men in an outer office, "Mr. Foster was called away on a particular mission. You will take over his desk for the present."

Then he bit his lips—and thought. He was a middle-aged man himself, almost, and he had known hard labor in his day of apprenticeship. His father had bequeathed Foster along with the business. His loss was like the loss of an old friend—for Foster's counsel was always solid.

Something like a tear glistened in the Head's eyes as he called his stenographer.

Foster came to his own place at last, driven by the inevitable reaction that had set in after he learned that a man cannot go back to the life of his childhood. The wisp-light that led him had died under the smiling skies of the old home to which he must always be a stranger. The yearning had passed as he learned his lesson. It was not the same; it could never be the same. The people were changed and different. The streets, the wood, the hills of home were alien. And he missed his morning-paper; and he needed the exhilaration of the ride down-town; and the scenery was—This all came by degrees. When he got back to the turmoil he was still dazed.

Automatically he reached in his pocket for his latch-key. As he did so his eyes fell upon the conventional surroundings —the hall-lamp, the paving, the flat-door across, the stone steps, the mail-box, the electric-buttons, the stucco. Something like a ghost of satisfaction leaped into a smile on his lips, as the door opened under the pressure of his fingers on the knob.

At first he did not observe that the subdued light that always came from a certain pink-shaded lamp was flooding his little sitting-room. The old familiar furniture, the tumbled books on the floor, the open piano, the flowers nodding on the mantle—these did not strike him immediately as infused with some essence of necessity for which his being craved.

There was an odor of cooking in the little kitchen. It swept through the house. He noted it gratefully without trying to associate past and present. It was there—always had been there at this hour, at least for years. He was accustomed to it. It was quite dinner time. All things were in their places—all natural, customary, nothing absent or wanting.

But suddenly he raised his head, and the happenings of the recent weeks and of their immediate predecessors crowded suffocatingly on him—the sense of realization, bitter and keen. In the center of the room his wife stood, her arms outstretched, her eyes gleaming.

"Tom," her lips said, very naturally, "where have you been? I got home yesterday and I 'phoned the office. They said—"

He smiled frankly and kissed her just as he had done every day of every year since they were wed. But in the soul of him a horror was growing. He was quaking and frantic. What had they told her at the office?

"What did they say?"

He tried to speak as easily as always, but he knew his face was like a distorted mask.

"What makes you look so funny? Some deep, dark secret, I suppose?"

She reached up and patted his face, touched his tie into shape, mothered him.

"They said—"

"Well, Tom, I was trying to tell you and you wouldn't let me. Is it as important as all that? It seems to me that when they have you body and soul all day, the children and I are entitled to you

in the evening. Mr. Sprang answered me. He just told me that you were out of town—business—thought you would still be away for some time. Supposed that when you returned to the city you would report to me first before going to the office. Oh, yes, and he said that if you did —Why, Tom, what is the matter? You haven't seen the children yet."

"Go on," said Tom Foster, his lips working.

"It wasn't so important, I tell you. You look like a sheet. He said to say to you that your desk was covered with dust. Now, tell where you've been."

Something warm started in the breast of Tom Foster, worked up to his eyes, ploughed down his cheek, and ended its course by splashing in a clear drop on his hand.

Next day Gregory picked up the thread of conversation where it had been cut.

"Your man, Foster, back?" he asked approvingly.

Sprang replied meditatively.

"It is mighty hard lines to be a cog, maybe, but there are other things worse," he said.

"It's the fault of the System, Dave—the fault of the System. After a man has been dead and buried for twenty-five years he sort of doesn't care for any resurrection—just wants to be dead, eh?"

"No matter what conditions confront one a man can always be a man—Mr. Foster! Please. Have you that invoice of Randall & Co? And 'phone Derricks that we'll take up the Hoglewood detail to-morrow!"

"Yes, sir," answered Tom Foster, briskly.

Folly Stakes

BY HOPKINS J. MOORHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY MAYNARD DIXON

THE day Bob Wallace and his *posse* of deputies rode into Cleora covered with dust and with the "Angel" in their midst, only one man in the camp was immune from the contagion of the prevalent excitement. While everybody else was tagging off after the sheriff and his prisoner, Jim Fargey sat in front of the Blue Light saloon quietly smoking. It was Jim Fargey's way not to get excited about anything. He could appreciate the importance of the capture as well as any worthy citizen of Cleora; but the thing was no concern of his and anyway he would hear every detail of it before the night was very old—would, indeed, be tired hearing of it.

Whether Jim Fargey took an appreciative interest in the event or whether he didn't was really no matter; the fact that he didn't was typical of Jim Fargey, just as the fact that the camp in general did was significant. For Cleora was a boom-town at this time, nestling back among the Colorado mountains in the little valley of the Arkansas—a noisy, busy, railroad-camp with promising future and inflated present, and its citizens figured that when the depredations, mysteriously begun back in the hills, culminated in the hold-up of the Leadville stage in Brown's Cañon, the time had arrived for this sort of thing to come to a halt, if for no other reason, at least in the interests of further inflation of values and the upholding of the beckoning hand to dwellers in other parts.

So Bob Wallace and his *posse* of deputies had gone scouring among the rocks and the fastnesses of the unknown country to round up the cause and put an end to the effect. And while "Dutch" McGee himself and the rest of his gang had got completely away, the sheriff had come back to Cleora with the "Angel," which was at least something. That the prisoner

was undoubtedly the novice of the gang, and rather a boy gone wrong than a full-fledged menace to a law-abiding community, was out of the reckoning altogether; the main point was that here was a road-agent to be made an example of. Decidedly, it was something to have captured even the "Angel."

But Jim Fargey sat in front of the saloon quietly smoking. He was a gambler, not a sheriff or a sheriff's deputy; he was a wanderer, not a permanent citizen of Cleora. He dealt faro in the Blue Light by night and smoked quietly by day; and whenever the splits came and the boom burst, as he had seen all the other booms burst, he would drift off with the tide, and, somewhere else, by day smoke quietly and by night deal faro.

For Jim Fargey had been a gambler for over a quarter of a century. He had faced the tiger in Montana, dealt stud on the Mississippi, and shot "craps" in New Orleans. One by one the years had climbed slowly up on his straight back and found room on the breadth of his shoulders—more than fifty of them; somewhere in the pack was the Joker that had whitened his hair, that had sifted the melancholy into the depths of his dark, inscrutable eyes, and mingled reserve with the courtesy that gave him manner. But he was still in the game; his immaculate shirt-front, that challenged the dirty flannel about him, seemed to breast aside whatever of yellow might be in his environment and the camp knew that with Jim Fargey behind the board they could always bank on a square run for their money.

But above all else, perhaps, was he a quiet man. A dozen sheriffs might come into camp with a dozen prisoners; everybody else might tag off to hear the circuit-judge set a day for the trial; the wildest kind of excitement might prevail—still would Jim Fargey sit in front of the saloon quietly smoking, because that was exactly what he would prefer to do.

About dusk on the evening of the day before the trial the "Angel" was sitting despondently in the cell of the little jail, when he was startled to see something white come skimming in between the bars and drop to the floor at his feet. He picked it up hurriedly and saw it was a peculiar little paper dart.

Feverishly he spread it out on his knees and peered close at the clumsy scrawl in the failing light. The note briefly stated certain directions he was to follow along about midnight. If he followed the course of the *arroyo* up the gulch, he would find a cayuse tethered in a cedar grove back amongst the rocks. He was to speak to no man, but make all haste to the old shack at Folly Stakes. The note was signed with three peculiar marks.

At sight of those three little marks, the "Angel" stood up and sucked in a great breath, his eyes shining, his jaw set. For he knew the "boys" stood by him after all. It had been his own fault he had been captured, and he had given up hope that they would attempt to get him out of the mess he had made of things. He didn't deserve it he knew, but—well, they were going to stand by him though it might mean death or capture if a hitch occurred.

And the "Angel" was filled with a great gratitude, and the thrill of the wild life with which he had associated himself lifted him in an ecstacy that was all-sufficient—the same that had come over him when, as a mere boy, he had read of the doings of one Brad Buchanan, whose daring outlaw-exploits had fired his boyish imagination and first aroused the devil in him. He was a mere boy still compared with the rest of the gang and the affair that had driven him away from home had been trivial after all; but he was bad enough, and sufficiently sincere in his ambition to touch the depths of Dutch McGee himself and thereby to win the fancy of that sole survivor of the old Buchanan gang. That was how it was.

And Dutch was going to stick by him nobly and live up to the ethics he preached—Buchanan ethics! It was great!

The night was hot. The air seemed pocketed in the little valley and the heat reflected from the rocks that had baked in the sun all day offset the shortness of

the twilight and the early in-closing of the mountain-shadows. The bit of moon that had hung above the towering Western peaks had dropped over on the other side and left the Arkansas to the dim light of the stars.

Beyond the head of the valley, about two hours' ride back into the hills, and well away from all accustomed trails, and frequented only by the wild creatures that roamed in the night.

But to "Angel," approaching it eagerly, not long after midnight, it seemed a haven of refuge. Turning a rocky spur at last, he found himself in the vicinity. He dismounted, and with the utmost caution climbed forward and upward until he was peering over the edge of the

Jim Fargey sat in front of the Blue Light saloon quietly smoking

was Folly Stakes. Here in days gone by some wandering prospectors had burrowed into the mountain-side in search of silver. They had gone so far as to erect a couple of buildings at the place and had sunk considerable money in the mine only to find its promise unfulfilled. The holes were still there, the timbers rotting in the shafts. The old shacks were still erect; but the place was known to few

ravine. On the opposite side he could make out the darker shadow of the shacks. There was not a spark of light in the place nor any outward indication of life.

Placing his hands on either side of his mouth, the "Angel" emitted a low, tremulous hoot and listened anxiously. He had not long to wait; an owl answered from the other side, the quavers trem-

bling away in weird melancholy. Hurrying back to his cayuse, the "Angel," a moment later, was riding down and around to the mouth of the ravine.

He left his horse there and, excitedly, ascended the steep path to the shacks.

As he approached, the "Angel" could make out the shadowy figure of a man standing in the doorway. It looked like Chic Yerex. The man stepped back as he entered and growled out the information that there was a candle on the table and they might as well have a light for a minute—till they mapped out the trail they would take to join the others. Wondering somewhat at the brusqueness of his reception, the "Angel" felt for the matches, struck one, and touched it to the candle.

As he did so he was conscious of the door being shut by his companion; but it was the grating of the key in the lock that made him whirl like lightning. The candlelight was glinting brightly along the barrel of a six-shooter which covered him where he stood and behind it was a man whom he did not remember ever having seen before in his life—a man who smiled with quiet amusement.

A frightened oath broke from the "Angel's" lips and he stood there staring in amazement. It flashed across him he was unarmed, though if he had his gun, the fellow had the drop on him completely. The "Angel" swore again and the other smiled good-humoredly.

"I aint a-goin' to hurt you, kid," he chuckled. "A fellow don't generally help a prisoner to escape to put a bullet through him, an' if you do git hurt it'll be your own fault, not mine. Sit down an' make yourself comfortable. We're goin' to hev a little chat, all to ourselves, you an' me, out here where it's quiet an' nobody'll be so ill-mannerly as to intrude. Sit down."

The "Angel" sat down. There was nothing else to do.

"Who are you?" he gasped.

The other had lowered the weapon and the "Angel" continued to watch him with growing wonder.

"Thought you'd find Dutch here, eh?" chuckled the stranger. "Or was it Chic Yerex? Or mebbe y'were expectin' to see Bat Olsen or shake hands with the Preacher — great fellow for shakin' hands, the Preacher, on'y he generally spoils it by rollin' his gun at the same time and parting with a bit of lead. Clever trick—remarkably clever trick! Don't you think so?"

"Who—who—" began the "Angel" weakly.

"On'y it aint the Preacher's trick, that," the other went on with the same amused smile. "Dutch McGee taught it to him an' Dutch got it years ago from Buchanan — Ah, you've heard of Buchanan, I see! It was from him Dutch got the three little marks he signs to notes afore he shoots them into jails an' such like—Sit down!"

The "Angel" sank back, nervously drawing his shirt-sleeve across his forehead.

"But this is wastin' time, kid," said the stranger with sudden briskness. "We've got to make our little talk much shorter than I'd like it to be, for you've got to be miles away from here before sun-up an' I've got to git back."

As he spoke, he deliberately laid his six-shooter on the deal table beside the candle, turned his back, and walked across the little room to the shelves in the corner. The "Angel" stared for a brief moment as if he could scarcely believe his eyes. He flashed one look at the broad retreating back; the next instant he had sprung for the gun. He uttered an exultant cry as his fingers closed on the grip of it. The stranger, turning slowly, gazed with amusement at him and at the gun leveled in his hand, and he laughed outright.

Then there was a flash of flame that seemed to come from nowhere at all. When the smoke had thinned, the gun was lying on the far side of the room and the amazed "Angel" was nursing an arm, benumbed by a thousand needle-prickings.

"You little fool!" the man cried angrily as he came toward him. "D'you want to let everybody within range of a pistol-shot know where they can find you? Sit down, I said. Now, don't try that again!"

He crossed over, picked up the six-

The 'Angel" was startled to see something white drop to the floor

shooter, and laid it again upon the table. Then without a look he went coolly over to the shelves again and came back with a bottle and a tin cup.

"Here! You look as if you needed a bracer. Down with it! There aint no occasion to git frightened."

The "Angel's" hand shook in spite of himself as he raised the cup, and when he had put it back on the table, he sat there staring still.

"Bu—Buchanan," he gasped. "They tol' me Buchanan was shot years ago, they said—somewhere in the Kentucky hills."

"That's right—third day of September it was, along about evenin', twenty-five years ago. What's matter with yeh?"

The "Angel" leaned forward eagerly.

"That gun-play—Where'd you learn that gun-play?" he demanded hoarsely. "Who are you that knows so many secrets? And what d'you want with me?"

"I'll tell you," said the stranger with a quick change of manner.

He drew the candle across the table so the light fell full upon the young face of the man opposite.

"I'll have to cut the story short fer time's gettin' precious. It's about Buchanan; I knew him. There was a woman—He went wrong because of a woman. But she was a good woman; didn't know she drove him to it. He loved her—oh, how he loved her! She wasn't fer the likes of him, though—he was nacherally a wild sort, an' she wouldn't have anythin' to do with him. He was drinkin' pretty hard afore she turned him down, an' after that he went on worse'n ever.

"They was both livin' in a little country town down in Kentucky. There was a garden in the front of her place an' it was full o' hollyhocks an' petuniers, an' she used to be tendin' it, an' weedin' in it, an' she used to wear a pretty pink dress, an' a ole sun-bonnet with the strings flappin' down on each side o' her curls—brown curls they were. Fer she was pretty!

"One day there come along a slick-dressed feller from the city an' he seen her in the garden an' fell in love with her. She took to him, too, an' after awhile they got married an' went to live in a little place with roses creepin' over the front of it. An' all the time Buchanan was drinkin' himself to death, an' carryin' on wilder'n ever.

"By an' by the folks began to take no-

tice that Mis' Porter warn't quite the same as she used to be—color all gone out of her cheeks, an' she was gettin' thin an' worrit-lookin', an' went about with a scared look in her eyes, almost. She'd been so happy-lookin' afore—singin' an' spry an' all that—you couldn't help noticin' the diff'rence. There'd been a baby girl come an' she'd been happy as the day was long up till the little one was nigh onto a year old.

"Then the change came over her an' the neighbors begun to talk about *him*. He used to go 'way an' leave her fer weeks at a time, an' whenever he was home he used to be quarrelin' all day long, till I reckon life was scarce worth livin' fer her.

"Course Buchanan heard 'bout the way things was goin', an' he took it on himself to investigate, an' he talked to the feller that had stole the girl from him, an' he talked mighty straight. But it didn't do no good an' things on'y got worse after that. Then one day Buchanan was passin' their place an' he heard screams comin' from back of the kitchen an' he just vaulted over the picket-fence, beside the road, an' went around to see what was up. What he seen was the feller beatin' his wife; so he just nacher'ly whipped out a gun an' fired it off.

"He had to skip out o' the country mighty quick after that, for they was after him hot; the feller's friends an' relatives had lots o' money an' they meant business. Well, that's how Buchanan come to run from the law. He saw the way things was shapin' fer him an' he just come to the conclusion he might's well play the game through to the finish. So he made fer the hills an' took to buckin' the law as a business. P'raps you know some of the things he done; he went completely bad, an' it warn't long afore they had a price on his head, an' men was huntin' him everywhere. He grew pretty cute in his ways an' got a gang about him that kep' the whole country in hot water fer goin' on two years.

"But y'can't keep that kind o' game up ferever. One day back in the hills they cornered the gang an' wiped 'em out—all but a couple of 'em that got away. No, no, y'can't keep that kind o' a game up ferever."

"An' Buchanan?" whispered the "Angel" breathlessly. "Buchanan was shot?"

"Buchanan was shot," repeated the other slowly. "Twenty-five years ago it was, third day of September, 'long about evenin'. That's the story—all of it, 'cept that Mis' Porter on'y lived about a year after Buchanan was wiped out—just about a year."

There fell a silence between the two men. The "Angel" wiped the moisture from his forehead.

"An' the kid—the little kid girl?" he ventured at length.

"Grew up into a pretty young woman, just like her mother used to be before her. She was adopted by a maiden lady with a kind heart an' come by an' by to call her 'Auntie' an' never knew no differ'nt. An' she used to tend to the garden, just like her mother afore her."

The man leaned forward suddenly. The candlelight fell on a face that was full of lines and the younger man shrank before the look that had leapt into the eyes which searched his own.

"She used to tend garden, just like her mother afore her; d'you hear that? An' one day there come along a young feller who fell in love with her, just like her father done with her mother. They got married an' went to live in a little home with a garden of their own. An' the girl was happy enough till her fool of a husband got shiftless, an' took to chummin' in with a bad crowd, an' goin' bad himself—Got some fool notion into his head that it was smart to sass the law, to carry a gun, an' to shoot. An' the time come when the young fool got tanked up too tight, got mixed in a fight, an' skipped out an' left one of the best little women that ever walked God's earth to shift for herself, 'stead of stayin' by her an' backin' her up as he'd sworn to do. Are yeh listenin', kid?" cried the man fiercely.

"Who are you?" gasped the "Angel" in terror.

"Never mind that," said the man sharply. "That aint here ner there. You've asked me that afore, an' you've also been wonderin' why I got you out of that scrape back there an' brought you

out here to talk to you. I'll tell you why. You're goin' back—goin' back to that little woman as is waitin' fer you; goin' back to become a man an' quit makin' a fool o' yourself. Y'owe it to her an' you are goin' to do it or by H e a v e n! I'll know the reason!

"Don't be a blamed fool, Carter — Yes, I know all about you. You've been a fool, now, long enough to do you fer the rest o' your life. You're on'y a kid yet with a kid's notions about things—Yes you are! I'm givin' it to you straight. I was a kid onct myself; I made a wreck o' my life an' I aint goin' to let you go the same way. A man can't buck the law fer-ever. He can't do it, I tell you, an' you've got to go back an' live straight—'count o' the little girl. God knows she's worth a dozen like you or me an' I aint goin' to let you spoil life fer her—an' that goes! You're goin' back, an' if y'ever play her dirt like her father done her mother, by Heaven! I'll find y'out — no matter where you go—an' I'll put a b u l l e t through you sure—"

"B u c h a n a n!" gasped the "Angel," shrinking and moving further back into the shadows.

"Buchanan was shot, I tell you!" cried the man fiercely. "Twenty-five years ago in the Kentucky hills. Buchanan's dead. An' it's on'y a question of a little while afore Dutch McGee an' his crowd'll all pass in their checks the same way. Y'can't keep that game up ferever —y'can't do it! If it hadn't been fer me, you'd have been out of the game to-day when those fellers back there got through with you. I'm givin' you the chanct, an' it's up to you to cinch it an' go back. Y'can take my word fer it, the other game aint worth it. It aint worth it—an' I know what I'm talkin' about.

"Now, then, Carter, it's time y'were off. You've got to be miles away from here by sun-up. You'll find my horse

The stranger, turning slowly, laughed outright

picketed down there in the *arroyo*. He's a good horse, Carter, an' he'll carry you through safely if you mind yourself. Keep to the old trail an' don't stop fer man ner devil. Y'better be goin', I reckon—right now. Come, we'll find the horse."

Silently the "Angel" got up and followed the other outside. The two men scrambled down the steep declivity to the bottom of the ravine without exchanging another word. The "Angel" was in the the saddle before he could find his tongue and even then he could do no more than lean down to grasp the other's hand, blurting his thanks. The stranger was peering up at him in the shadow, his hand resting on the cantle.

"Remember," he admonished slowly, "Carter, what I said. She's worth it, that little girl, an' you're goin' to quit makin' a fool o' yourself."

"Yes," promised the "Angel" with emphasis. "Yes!"

"She's worth it, Carter."

"She's worth it," echoed the "Angel" and there was a break in the voice that brought a satisfied smile to the other's face, half hidden as it was, in the darkness. He abruptly pulled the boy down to him and whispered in his ear.

"What!" cried the "Angel." "Great Pelican! D'you mean it?"

"I shore do."

"Tell me, is—is it—"

He could get no farther.

"Yep! a boy, Carter—a little curly-headed kid. The old trail, mind! Keep to the old trail—So long!"

He slapped the flank of the horse; there was a rattle of gravel and horse and rider were swallowed up in the darkness.

"S'long!" came back joyfully from out the black.

The man smiled again, and stood there, listening, till all sound of the hoof-beats had died away in the distance.

There was wild excitement in Cleora and untold mystery. The prisoner had escaped in the most unaccountable manner. The sheriff hastily got together his *posse* of deputies and they rode away to hunt the trail of the fugitive, leaving behind them excited groups in the dusty street.

Jim Fargey sat in front of the saloon quietly smoking. He was a gambler; he was a wanderer. He dealt faro in the "Blue Light" by night and smoked quietly by day; and whenever the splits came and the boom burst, as he had seen all the other booms burst, he would drift off with the tide, and somewhere else by day smoke quietly, and by night deal faro.

The Exception

BY WALTER ARCHER FROST

WHAT did I have against that feller at The Star?"

Bill Lucas, of the Double-L, whose interruption of Renaldo's — the horse-trainer—performance, had nearly landed us in jail, looked at me in surprise.

"Well, part of it was the way he acted, but it was mostly what he said," he went on. " 'Peerless Equestrian Prodigy,' he called himself, just as if, when he was bellering for his bottle, I hadn't been riding the range for twenty years! Why, when it comes to hosses, that feller doesn't know his way about.

"His tricks was just the worst I ever saw. If a 'puncher' couldn't do better'n 'em blindfolded and with his hands laced up behind his back, he sure would have died of thirst in a populated town. So, that counterfeit's lay-out, considering who he said he was, struck me as something onderhand and small. Moreover, I took a big dislike to him at the start-off, fer he put me in mind of a feller I

run into once down in the San Miguel.

"Never told you about it?"

WELL, IT WAS QUITE a while ago, when New Mexico was new territory.

I'd come up the Chiso'm trail to Valdez with a handy bunch of cows, and, when I'd sold 'em out, I had so much money that it made me philanthropical. Nice town, Valdez. Only trouble is that, in spots, the population's mud-colored and irresponsible, and after I'd got up from a game with some of these last named, I found I hadn't a thing left but my clothes.

Some of their plays had been new to me, and I made inquiries, which started a riot. They was in numbers and I aggregated only one. Even then, though, I did business brisk and regular until I went to sleep from being lambasted with a chair.

When I wakes up, I was tied in place on a hoss, Mazeppa-wise. They was a led-hoss by me and a letter in my boot from the daughter of the *alcalde*. You see, she'd dislodged me, after I'd been left fer dead, and had me carted out and started toward the rising sun. It was sure thoughtful of her. Just the same, though, I've always thought, while she was at it, she might have chucked in a hundred or two of what I'd been plucked of by her relatives. I'd been worse off than that, however, and I took in my belt. I had the cayouses, and I felt an idea they'd do to start on. I was right there, as you'll see before very long.

We was going east. Nice country, I said it was, down there, but I didn't stop to git any time-exposures of the place. All I asked was to be considerable in front of where those *hidalgoes* had emptied me with marked cards and loaded dice.

It wasn't just what you'd call crowded along that trail. But about the second day, I comes up with a feller meandering along in the same state as myself.

"How," says he, very courteous, about nine inches of his gun protruding from his shirt.

"How," says I, my gun the same as his.

"Shake," says he.

We shook and rode on reserved and sorrowful.

Then, he folds his arms.

"Friend," says he, "*dolce, far niente,* or let's ease her up a bit."

And after that, we pairs and goes on careless and compatible.

Before long, we camps and eats what he produced. Then, he begins:

"I'm a bankrupt and a wanderer. Sold out my *rancho,* and turned the proceeds over to strangers through the medium of cards. It's the amusements of this locality that's done for me. After graduating from the biggest university this country's got, I've whittled down to this." He looked hard at me, and shook his face that was big and wise in build. "Nothing left," says he, and pulled off his hat and stuck his fingers through the holes in it. Which gave me a view of his roof. Shingles was gone complete. "Been that way for ten years," says he slow and indifferent. "Come so from studying under a heavy pressure light."

"You must have gone at it real earnest," says I. "But what's a whole lot more to the point, I've just lost my permanent address the same way you did. Recollecting all you learnt at the seminary, can you p'int out any chance of quick replenishment?"

"I've thought of that a good deal lately," says he. "But, as things look now, the only way's to move on to Fayetteville. They's a circus holding down at Fayetteville. Big crowds there. Folks goes in, leaving their cayouses tied outside. It may be because I'm too discouraged to be particular, but it seems to me if a man was a little unconventional —"

"Not while you're with me! When a hoss is took down here the inhabitants gets plumb aggressive and passionate; th' man's always caught, and, if they isn't a tree handy, they uses a .44. We'll ride on, though, for there may be a game o' chanct begun, at which, though I don't just like to mention it, I've once or twice had a run of luck incredible."

"We'd better approach, then, and I'll do what I can to 'assist,' for, even if I'm down and out just now, my intellect's developed high. More than that, if it

comes that you lose your hosses before you strikes your gait, you can cash in mine without dismounting or hauling on th' bit."

We moves on then, an' we hit Fayetteville late that afternoon.

It wasn't much of a exhibit, as I look back at it. They was a few animals, lonely as a Englishman in th' provinces; a few clowns, some of 'em in uniform, two or three side-shows, with things in bottles that cost two bits to look at 'em, an' a Wild Man that looked so much like a Greaser that he didn't excite surprise. Still, we'd been so long where they was only cows and cayouses to be seen that we took to that circus-show enthusiastic from th' bottom up.

The regular performance hadn't started yet, but they was a open-air one doin' something, and we hiked over, ridin' through the crowd, our animals being cow-ponies, and used to obstacles. At which they was some profanity, but we kep' on, an' the feller in th' ring looked bright an' cheerful, when he saw us come. He was a big, rangy sort of cuss, half-dressed in red tights, with a white sash combination round his midst, and a shirt the same color without any sign of seams.

"Ladies and gents," he was barking continual, "if any one of you has a hoss that's given to onexpectedness, bring him to me. I've got a standing bet that I breaks him in three minutes by the clock. Remember, fifty—"

Before he could take it back, I had my buckskin in the ring.

"If you wins, you keeps th' hoss. And, if you lose, th' fifty's mine," says I.

"That's fair," he answers, lookin' over th' cayouse.

And that comforted me. I needed th' money bad.

I had considerable hopes in that buckskin, fer a meaner, more sudden-gaited osteopath never tried to message you with four iron clubs; very active and supporting 1100 pounds. Yes, I might say he was right impulsive, in a cross-grained sort of way, an' having some habits quite original.

The feller in the tights looked sideways at him casual, then jumps in clost, an' yanks like a steam-winch on his bit from left to right. Which was a new one on the buckskin; an', when he looks down to see what's going on, the trainer fixed him so steady with his eyes that the hoss that'd come on his hind legs to th' ring, seemed so took by the view he couldn't endure to look away.

A couple more minutes, the feller looks at him, then walks three times backward round th' ring, that infatuated quadriped coming after him all meek and dutiful.

"Stop!" he calls out, then, and th' hoss stood like a moniment.

"I will now fire a gun off onderneath his ear, and he will neither rare nor buck," says he.

"He'll bite, though," says I, and sasshays onderneath the ropes.

"Not so," the feller says.

And he was right: th' hoss liked it so much his joy was pitiful.

Then the trainer put him through just such didoes as Renaldo did to-night: Shake hands, roll over, an' play 'dead dog,' th' buckskin doin' everything he told him to.

Then th' feller says: "You can have your hoss back, sonny. He aint got life enough for me."

The way th' crowd laughed made me turn on that *sang-froided* circus-man:

"Just a little more, and you goes to the repair-shop," says I. "That's better. And now look here: I've got another hoss. Bet same as before. Will I bring him in?"

"Of course," says the feller speaking quick an' free.

This time, I laughs, fer the roan had what you might call a protracted sort of a temperament; for moroseness and cold, onreflecting ironicalness, he sure was a unclassified protoplasm. An' when he was rough awakened out of sleep, he just got plumb contemporaneous. So I was glad to see that he was sleeping now. When I roused him, he bellered, and sent two dogs to th' happy hunting-grounds ahead of their schedule, as he towed me an' three dun-complected locals to th' ring.

His ears gat down like a angry cat's, when he seen th' circus-man, an' I was downright sorry fer the feller when I let go th' bit.

I needn't have been. Th' same yank on th' bit, th' same way o' looking him out of countenance—

An' if we didn't have to rope the roan to keep him from fondling of that circus-man to death!

I didn't linger very long there after that. I hunted up th' man I'd fell in with up th' trail.

"How'd you come out," he asks.

"Fine," says I. "If I felt sure you was in this—" An' I grabs him by the neck.

"No, I'm a stranger here," he whispers, speaking hard, fer he hadn't quite his usual amount of breath; "but let me up, for it'll be as good as a play. We stand to make—"

"What th' ——?" says I, and when I leaves go, he falls backward on the ground. But he comes to quickly. "It's shady in th' *fonda,* you varygated fool. You can come in behind me."

I follows and he goes.

Being somewhat tired, he seats himself. Then he looks about him thoughtfully:

"Th' facts of hypnotism or induced somnambulism are well known to physiologists," says he.

"I'm real glad to hear you say that," I told him. But he went along:

"The state is often secured by asking the patient to imagine that it is a frosty morning, and requesting of him to count his breaths."

"You'll feel better, when you gits through," I says to him by way of encouragement, but he was that gone he didn't raise his head; instead, he goes on:

"Though the usual method is to hold a bright object a little above the middle of the forehead so as to require exertion on the part of the patient to look at it with a steady gaze."

"Whoa!" I yells.

But he'd got the bit between his teeth and run away, saying:

"But, in either case, it is necessary to get the patient's eye. It was so here, where in the first instance, the patient was—"

"My buckskin, and, in the second case, my roan." I'd revived just in time.

"Just so," says th' scientific phenom. I'd jeered at. "And now, keeping in mind that the operator has to get the patient's eye, I'm curious to know what'd happen if the patient couldn't see."

"You mean, if the patient-hoss was blind." I gets up then deliberate. "You kin come along with me."

"You know where there's such a animal?"

"Total and absolute, an' deafer'n a post beside."

"Which gives us all the facts we need, and, as the lawyers say, makes out our case."

That night, we took th' back trail, and our cayouses was wet some when we got at the *alcalde,* in his *patio.* We hadn't, between us, enough to buy a drink, but my partner's head didn't leak, even if all the tar-paper was off, and after he'd talked a while in his object-no-money way, the *alcalde* passed refreshments out to us, and things had come to us to stay.

"Poco tiempo, señores," says the *alcalde. "Poco mas momentos,"* which is triple-plate Castillian for "I wont keep you waiting long," and he didn't. In half an hour, which is rapid for them folks, he'd promised us th' hoss. Of course, the animal was blind and deaf, but, from the familiar way he acted, you'd never have guessed his state. Particular after his coming to me eager, when I signaled to him by pounding on th' ground. You see, he'd used to be mine, before I'd sat down to that game with the *alcalde* and his sons and nephews, a little ways back two days.

Now, I knew that hoss. Likewise, I knew what he was going up against. An' putting the two together, I seen my best play was to make that yank the trainer always gave the signal for all the cayouse's cussedness.

So, for the next two weeks I worked along that line, getting him accustomed to the jerk and teachin' him what to do right after it. An' the way he caught on was something scandalous. I'm fairly active, and I was posted on his leads, but, just the same, he almost got me every time I gave that yank on his bit. I polished him off a few days more, and then we picked up the trail of that there circus-chap.

They'd got up to the other side o' the county now, but, ridin' leisurely, four days brought us up with 'em. An' there he was, same as before, just rakin' in th' spoil; fer of all th' crowd, they wasn't a cowboy who hadn't lost his fifty or a hundred per.

Fer a while, we lay low an' watched him take in th' stuff, and, when it looked like he'd accumulated all we could use, we greased our boots and waded in.

"Hello!" says th' feller, seeing me on th' approach, "got a fifty in them pantaloons of yours?"

"I stakes th' hoss," I answers, and sends in one of my pardner's, a little one, fat an' sleek fer a decoy. Of course, he kep' it, putting it in a corral with the other ones he'd got.

Then, I brung in another, an' another, an' he took 'em, every one.

"It's sure like robbing of you," says th' feller with a laugh.

"Saw-wood," says I. "I've got another hoss. An' here's where we alters th' bet somewhat: Your fifty says you'll break him in three minutes by th' clock. Hev' you five hundred says you kin stay ten seconds on his back, an' a thousand that you kin make him mind th' bit?"

"I hev; and, what's more, I've fifteen hundred says he'll be mine in five minutes, an' that you're the International Fool," says he. "An' it's all against th' hoss," he yells, excited an' speakin' very free.

"If you wins th' first, of course th' other bets is off," I told him.

But he was about beside his self.

"Don't talk so much, but bring th' hoss in," says he.

While I went for our animal, my pardner done some soliciting in th' crowd, an' th' way his bets was taken'd hev' alarmed a man who wasn't so high developed scientifically.

"It's a innovation in research, an' we'll have the demonstration presently," he whispers.

"If we wins, we leaves," I answers, "an', if we lose, we stays here permanently."

By then, we was in th' ring; I leaves go the cayouse's mane, an' kind of onsteady, steps outside.

Th' hoss stood quiet, seemed his mind was far away. An', when th' trainer walked toward him, he didn't budge or make a sound. It surprised th' feller, I could see, but he'd tackled so many horses, he was confident. Then, he comes in close an' stared at him like th' others, an' pretty soon steps back, an' begins to talk to th' crowd:

"First, I'll see if he minds having a gun fired close behind his head."

He ketches up a handy one, and lets go six; but th' ears that couldn't hev heard a cannon didn't pay much attention to a .44, and that set th' feller feeling good about himself. "Begins to look as if he was mine," he laughed out free. "But I'll do it all."

He goes back to the hoss again.

"Next thing's to teach him obedience to th' rein," says he, an' jumps in with that same old yank from left to right.

An' then it happened—Fer th' cayouse frog-jumped forward twelve foot to a spring, an' th' circus-chap left th' earth as if he hated it, contorted himself terrible through three backward summersets, an' when he hit th' earth he kep th' attitude he landed in!

"I do think you should have been a acrobat," says I, as I untangled him from himself an' fanned him with my hat. At the same time, I hears my pardner saying: *"Vos morituri salutamus,"* which means "you'll go to the mortuary if you don't scramble up and pay your debts." With one hand he was gatherin' in th' stuff, and, with the other, holdin' off th' crowd.

Th' circus-chap was looking round mechanical and wild. "Th' only hoss that ever—"

An' then I knew it was time fer us to go. I went toward th' cayouse, but he stopped me.

"Science says—"

"Don't mind her. When she gits up against a hoss like this, she's sure a amatoore."

The feller come nearer as I vaulted up: "He's blind," he screams.

"Been that way from birth," says my pardner. "An' likewise deaf, which makes him a exception, but doesn't affect th' bets."

And, simultaneous, we hits th' trail.

Parisian Fashion Model IX C—From Life

By special contract with REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Drécoll: —Costume of cerise [illegible] trimmed with bands of silk embroidery.

Parisian Fashion Model X C—From Life

By special contract with REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Redfern:—Costume of brown checked voile trimmed with green taffeta.

Parisian Fashion Model XI C—From Life

By special contract with REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Redfern:—Blue tailored costume trimmed with black braid.

Parisian Fashion Model XII C—From Life

By special contract with REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Bernard:—Costume of black mousseline made over blue, the flowers embroidered in silk.

Parisian Fashion Model XIII C—From Life

By special contract with REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Drécoll:—Costume of crepe de chine, the bodice of Venetian lace.

Parisian Fashion Model XIV C—From Life

By special contract with REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Martial-Armant:—Costume of rose crepe de chine trimmed with lace and white soutache.

Parisian Fashion Model XV C—From Life

By special contract with REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Jeanne:—Evening costume of white tulle embroidered in blue.

Parisian Fashion Model XVI C—From Life

By special contract with REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Doucet:—Dinner gown of old rose satin with velvet flowers; corsage of Venetian lace.

SOME DRAMAS OF THE DAY

by Louis V. De Foe

A SPIRIT of reverential awe—or is it merely the unconscious manifestation of one of our many deep-rooted theatrical prejudices?—has always led us to balk at any attempt to represent the Deity on the stage. Even the use of a symbol to express the Divine Presence as a dramatic force has been rigidly opposed. So it is the more surprising that a play, just produced in New York, the leading character of which is avowedly the spirit of the Son of Man incarnate, has been quick to win a high place in the public esteem and to offer every prospect of long continued success.

Mr. Charles Rann Kennedy's drama, "The Servant in the House," is in every respect a notable work. On its surface it tells a story of intense interest and sympathetic appeal. But it has a special philosophical meaning, for it is really an indignant attack expressed in terms of symbolism upon conventional piety and religious hypocrisy which often undermine the good influence of the church. Every character, incident, and spoken line carries the double significance of the practical application of a powerful sermon and an absorbing play. It is aimed against no particular denomination or sect. It reaffirms only those truths which underlie all religious beliefs. Its text is only a simple reassertion of the principle of the Brotherhood of Man.

There can be no doubt that the author intends *Manson,* the Indian butler—the servant in the house of the English vicar —to be interpreted as a reincarnation of the Christ. The disguise of Mr. Walter Hampden, who acts the rôle, closely resembles the accepted portraits of the Savior. His mission in the vicar's disturbed house is peace and good will. In his thoughtful, gentle, and profoundly grave presence, all the vital forces of the drama find their source.

This mysterious *Manson,* unknown to the other characters, is the Bishop of Benares, the head of a powerful church in India founded on the principle of Brotherly Love. He is one of three brothers who, years before, have become separated. A second, the *Rev. William Smythe,* has become a smug, prosperous vicar. Another, *Robert Smith,* the "drainman," has drifted down the scale and is a drunken outcast in the village. His condition is partly due to the neglect of his clerical brother, who has become the foster-parent of his child.

In the language of the play's symbolism the vicar's church needs repairing. It is no longer attended by its old congregation. The vicar does not understand

Miss Edith Wynne Matthison as the Vicar's Wife in "A Servant in the House."
Photograph by Hallen, New York.

Walter Hampden as "Manson" in "A Servant in the House."
Photograph by Sarony, New York.

the causes, but they are clear to *Mary,* his niece, the daughter of the village ne'er-do-well. She has detected a stench in the church and she notices that it leads directly to the vicar's study where his sermons are written.

The vicar has laid plans to repair his crumbling edifice and has brought into consultation the *Bishop of Lancashire,* who stands for Mammon and is symbolical of his kind in his deafness and blindness. This wily old materialist sees in the conference an opportunity for his own financial gain, and he also is attracted by the prospect of making the acquaintance of the *Bishop of Benares* whose visit is expected.

Thus the characters are brought together. Soon the influence of *Manson* begins to make itself felt. He sees the flaws and weaknesses to which the others are blind. Little by little he unmasks their hypocrisies. In the end, the servant becomes the master in the house. It is through his will that the *Bishop of Lancashire's* grosser materialism is exposed and this apostle of Mammon is driven from the house. Through his gentle compassion the heart of the vicar is softened toward *Bob,* the outcast. He is brought back and reunited with his child. Then the scales are brushed from the vicar's eyes and he is made to understand the false standards by which he has lived. And the sympathetic interest of these incidents, which extend through two acts, exerts a dramatic appeal as intense as is ever encountered in the theatre.

Then follows, to carry out the climax of the symbolism, *Bob's* exposure of the foul drain which leads from the vicarage under the foundation of the church to the hideous sepulcher beneath the altar, filled with the muck and dead things of the past, polluting the living church. The description is in rugged Anglo-Saxon but every word of it, like every changing incident in the play, contains a vital truth dramatically expressed.

I know of no play in recent years in which criticism of contemporary life is so apt and carried to such an amazing extreme without weakening the essential dramatic interest of the story. No play in my remembrance so totally defeats all attempts at detailed description. The

symbolism is at once simple and profound. It is subtle but it is also so clear that any child can follow it. "The Servant In The House," in short, represents one of the highest intellectual uses to which the theatre may be put, and it offers capital entertainment, varied in humorous interests, as well.

There are only six essential characters, at least five of which are perfectly interpreted. The most important task falls to Mr. Walter Hampden as *Manson.* The others are Mr. Tyrone Power as the drainman; Mr. Arthur Lewis as the *Bishop of Lancashire;* Mr. Charles Dalton as the vicar; Miss Edith Wynne Matthison as the vicar's wife, and Miss Mabel Moore as his niece. This company is the nucleus of a new stock-organization under the direction of Mr. Henry Miller. If its later productions carry out the abundant promise of the first it will take a foremost rank on the American stage.

Arthur Lewis as the Bishop in "A Servant in the House."

Photograph by Sarony, New York.

Tyrone Power and Charles Dalton in "A Servant in the House."

Photograph by Sarony, New York.

FAME and fortune await the actor who can turn Don Quixote into a dramatic hero. But where is the playwright who can successfully fit the pages of Cervantes' voluminous novel to the stage? Time after time it has been tried, but the Knight of the Melancholy Visage sturdily resists the lure of the footlights.

The most recent writer to attempt a dramatic setting of Cervantes' picturesque hero is Mr. Paul Kester, whose drama of "Don Quixote" has just been added to the *repertoire* of Mr. Edward H. Sothern. So much conscientious effort on the latter's part should have merited more fortunate results. In spite of the time and money lavished on the production, it has proved a pretentious and expensive failure which, in spite of its beauties as a pageant, is wholly ineffective as a play.

The defect of the dramatization is that Mr. Kester has striven to accomplish too much. It would have been better had he given the Mad Don the center of the stage and reared him to his audience's view in some of the most stirring of his exploits. He might have preserved the atmosphere of the tale rather than the dregs of the book.

But in his effort to introduce a romantic interest he has elaborated the rivalry of *Dorothea de Clenardo* and *Lucinda de la Llano* for the love of *Don Fernando* at the expense of the Knight. Here, in effect, is "Hamlet" with the Prince of Denmark left out, and the consequence is disappointment and confusion.

Almost an entire act is wasted in puzzling explanations before the *Don* and his faithful *Sancho Panza* make their appearance, fresh from their tilt with the windmills in the court-yard of the inn at La Mancha. You hear of this famous escapade only by the long descriptions of others. The vigil over the armor beside the inn-pump helps to break the monotony of the early scene, but soon afterward the play drifts into hopeless confusion.

There is a tournament in the scene of the inn-kitchen, but it proves to be only a tournament of talk. Then comes the *Don's* assault upon the wine-skins, but only the pandemonium of the battle reaches you. Presently the whole cavalcade adjourns to the courtyard of the Duke's Palace where the ridiculous enthroning of *Sancho Panza* takes place. In the final act visions of the fancied enemies of *Don Quixote* pass before his disordered mind and then, with his returning reason, comes his death.

However much at sea Mr. Kester may have been in grasping and welding together the play, Mr. Sothern forms a definite ideal of the Knight and transmits it faithfully to his audience. In the matter of outward disguise his character is the most effective thing in the drama. His *Don Quixote* is the very ecstacy of romantic madness and the figure, extravagant on the surface as it is, has an underlying pathos which amounts almost to tragedy.

The only other character which I was able to disentangle from the haze of confused ideas is *Sancho Panza,* out of which Mr. Rowland Buckstone makes only a dreary caricature, acted in a vein of cheap burlesque. The rest of the rôles are quite inconsequential and, moreover, they are acted without comprehension by Mr. Sothern's company which, in its present state, is quite unworthy of his pretentions as a dramatic-star. In fact, this whole attempt to stage Cervantes' novel is a disappointment, which is more unfortunate for all concerned because no expense was spared to make it a success.

MR. CLYDE FITCH, whose activities during the present theatrical season have not been nearly as great as in other years, has finally come strongly to the front with a breezy little farce entitled "Girls." At its opening performance the piece won a very secure niche in popular favor and it now promises to remain on Broadway until well into the Summer. It is written in Mr. Fitch's characteristic vein, but its chief interest lies not so much in plot or incident as in the dramatist's ability to catch and reflect the small but significant peculiarities of feminine nature.

There are three girls who hold your attention and compel your laughter during the three acts of this little play. They are working-girls struggling for a living in the hurly-burly of New York life and their common denominator is their hatred for the masculine sex. Their citadel is the top floor of a studio-apartment, consisting of one room and a kitchenette and here, bonded together, they swear loyalty to their state of spinsterhood and defy all masculine comers.

Just as they are retiring for the night, in beds improvised out of all sorts of furniture, Man invades their studio for the first time. He has been driven out of another apartment in the building by an angry husband. Seeking any convenient port in a storm he dashes into the spinsters' precincts without ceremony. Of course he is hustled out without delay, over a bridge across the areaway made from a window-shutter, but, somehow, he leaves his masculine influence behind. Each of the girls, without acknowledging it to the rest, straightway sees a great, new light in her life. How *Pamela,* the secretary; *Violet,* the stenographer, and *Kate,* the free-lance newspaper-writer, are wooed away from their self-imposed celibacy forms the remainder of the amusing incidents which crowd upon each other so rapidly that they leave the audience no time to detect their triviality.

Scene in the Inn Kitchen at LaMancha in Act II of "Don Quixote"
E. H. Sothern as the Don standing on the table.
Photograph by Hall, New York.

Miss Clara Blandick as Rosa in "The Royal Mounted."
Photograph by White, New York.

Cyril Scott as Lieut. Victor O'Byrne in "The Royal Mounted."
Photograph by White, New York.

It happens, of course, that the first man-invader of the studio, is the junior partner of the firm by which *Pamela* is employed. She holds out against the inevitable until the end. But when *Violet* has succumbed to *Frank Loot,* the lawyer's clerk, and *Kate* has hearkened to the pleadings of the youth who appreciated her genius during her short stage-career, and when each has surprised the other in her carefully concealed love-affair, they get together, decide that celibacy is a failure, and add a marriage-amendment to the by-laws of the Manhaters' Club.

The interest of the farce is not strictly confined to the three manhaters and their final undoers. All the characters of New York studio-life, from the soprano, who yearns to get married but can't, to the janitor and the postman, are made to figure in diverting situations which show Mr. Fitch's unfailing acute observation of the small things of life.

Most surprising of all, Mr. Fitch has at last succeeded in drawing a male character who measures up to the standards of substantial masculinity. *Edgar W. Holt,* the first invader of the spinsters' apartments, is a plausible and entertaining creation, and he is capitally acted by Mr. Charles Cherry. As for the "girls," they are impersonated with a great deal of sparkle and charm by Miss Laura Nelson Hall, Miss Ruth Maycliffe, and Miss Amy Ricard, who let none of the humors of the cleverly concocted situations go astray.

SOME day a playwright will emerge who will do for the northwest wilderness of Canada what Sir Gilbert Parker and Edward Stewart White in narrative-fiction have done for the wooded fastnesses of the Province of Quebec. That trackless forest expanse, with its sparse population of lumbermen, hunters, trappers, and fugitives from justice, has a mysterious charm which, one day, will inspire a pen that will catch and reflect the true spirit of its rugged life. Romance lies there, but it needs the experience of actual contact to find it out.

Because Mr. Cecil B. and Mr. William C. De Mille have only a superficial knowledge of this grim Northland, be-

Brigham Royce, Cyril Scott, Charles Lane, and Miss Clara Blandick in "The Royal Mounted."
Photograph by White, New York.

cause they write of its privations and adventures with their eyes set, not upon Nature but upon the theatre, their new play, "The Royal Mounted," which is among the recent Spring productions, impresses me as something artificial and incomplete. It needs more than snow-capped cabins and frost-covered trees; more than *patois* and rough horse-play, to picture the lives of the advance-guard on the ragged edge of this northern wilderness. These young dramatists are wasting their time, it seems to me, telling over again the half-complete information they have gained from books.

The play, nevertheless, is not without an artificial romantic interest, if one be willing to blind himself to some of the incongruities and far-fetched coincidences of its story. And it surely derives charm from Mr. Cyril Scott, who acts its hero with manly sincerity, breezy humor, and romantic fervor which generally distinguish his work. He is not as fortunate in his new rôle as he was in "The Prince Chap," but it is one, nevertheless, which will lure the matinée girls throughout another year. What he needs at present is a Belasco to add the touch of verisimilitude to his play.

Victor O'Byrne, whom Mr. Scott impersonates, is an Irish lieutenant in the Royal Mounted, a detachment of the Canadian police detailed to hold in check the border-ruffians who infest the Province of Alberta in the Canadian Northwest. He has taken service in the troop after a family rupture caused by his parents' matrimonial ambitions in his behalf. He is represented as brave, fond of adventure, and gifted with a keen sense of Irish humor. His exploits have won him a reputation as a woodland Sherlock Holmes, and he is viewed with mingled admiration and hatred by the criminals on whose track he is set.

A murder has been committed in a lumber-camp on the Great Elk River and *O'Byrne* is detailed on the case. Representing himself to be a hunter, he sets out for the camp, where he obtains lodgings in the cabin of *Sam Larrabee,* whose

Group of players presenting "Girls." The Misses Ruth Maycliffe, Laura Nelson Hall, and Amy Ricard as "the girls."
Photograph by Hall, New York.

sister, *Rosa,* soon makes an impression on his susceptible Irish heart. At the end of a month they are engaged to be married. It is at this juncture, however, that the body of the murdered man is found in a ravine. It is then discovered that his wounds were made by bullets of a caliber which fit only his host's revolver. Thus rises the old quandary between love and duty, so long dear to the heart of the romantic playwright.

But it leads nevertheless, to a stirring climax. Ordering *Larrabee* to arm himself, *O'Byrne* takes him prisoner in a hand to hand struggle. Of course he is misunderstood by his sweetheart, who sees in him only a traitor to her love. Her brother's capture, furthermore, means his death on the gallows. The recriminations uncover the cause which led to the shooting. The deed was committed, it is shown, for *Rosa's* protection from assault. The upshot is that *O'Byrne* removes the handcuffs from his prisoner, gives back his weapons, allows him to escape and surrenders himself as a traitor to the Canadian Government.

But no one expects that *O'Byrne* will pay the penalty for his generosity. It develops at the close that the murdered man was an outlaw with a price on his head. Consequently, *Larrabee* is no murderer and by the same reasoning *O'Byrne* is no traitor. So the final curtain falls on smiles, not tears, with sunshine glistening on the snow-drifts.

The play is expertly performed. The spontaneity of the acting, in fact, hides much that is not plausible in the characters. While Mr. Scott easily dominates the situation, other rôles are effectively impersonated by Miss Clara Blandick as *Rosa,* Mr. Charles Lane as her brother, Brigham Royce as a lumber-camp foreman of sinister personality, and Mr. Duane Wagar as a French-Canadian who is the butt of the horseplay of the camp. There are, besides, numerous lesser parts.

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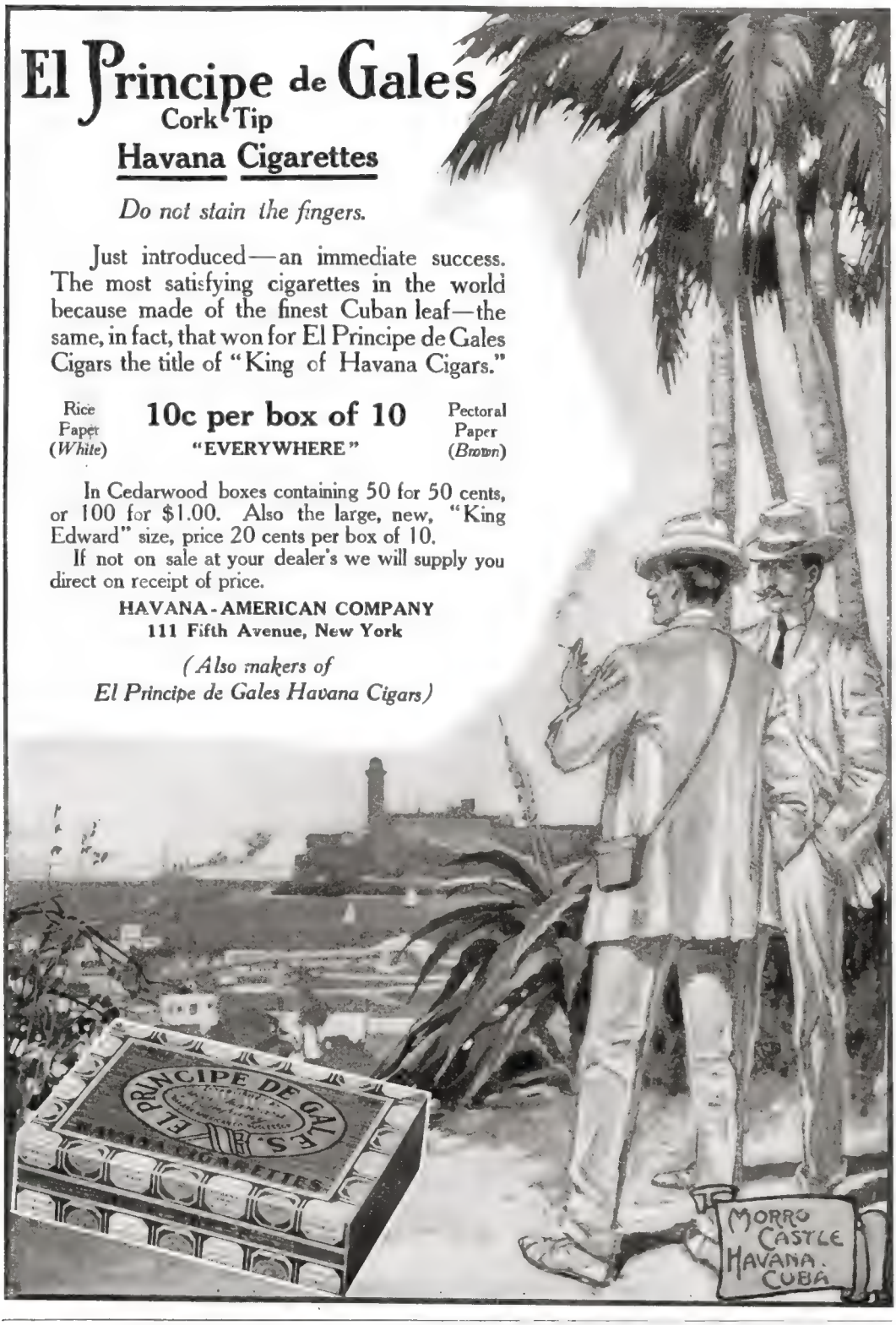

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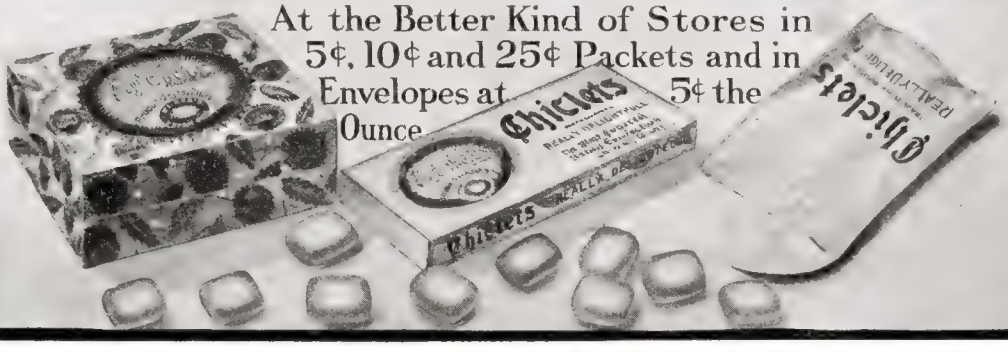

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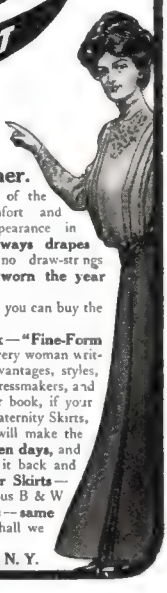

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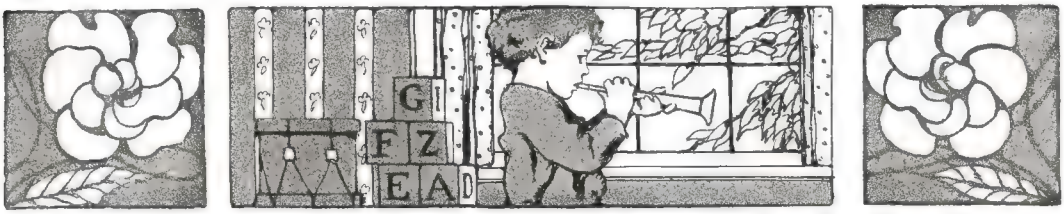

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Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition 1909

NORTHERN PACIFIC

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Strong's Arnica Tooth Soap

Antiseptic, preserves while it beautifies—sweetens the breath—hardens the gums—whitens the teeth—a leading dentifrice for a

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Preserves while it Beautifies

The metal package is the most convenient for travel or the home—no liquid or powder to spill or waste.

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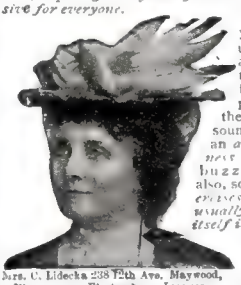
The Stolz Electrophone—A New Scientific and Practical Invention, for those who are Deaf or Partially Deaf—may now be TESTED IN YOUR OWN HOME

Deaf or partially deaf people may now make a month's trial of the Stolz Electrophone on payment of a small deposit. This is unusually important news for the deaf, for by his plan the *final* selection of the *one completely satisfactory hearing aid is made easy and inexpensive for everyone.*



Mrs. C. Lidecka 238 12th Ave. Maywood, Ill., wears an Electrophone. Less conspicuous than eyeglasses.

This new invention (U. S. Patents Nos. 858, 986 and 855, 458) renders unnecessary such clumsy, unsightly and frequently harmful devices as trumpets, horns, tubes, ear drums, fans, etc. It is a tiny electric telephone that fits on the ear and which, the instant it is applied, *magnifies* the sound waves in such manner as to cause an *astonishing increase* in the *clearness* of *all sounds*. It overcomes the buzzing and roaring ear noises and, also, so *constantly* and *electrically exercises the vital parts of the ear that, usually, the natural* **unaided** *hearing itself is gradually restored.*

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E. H. STOLZ, Mgr Dear Sir:—I got so deaf I could not hear with my speaking tube and was advised to try the Electrophone. After **fifteen years of deafness,** discomfort and worry I now **hear perfectly** at church and at concerts.—W. R. UTLEY, Sales Mgr., S. A. Maxwell & Co., 430-434 Wabash Avenue, Chicago.

Write or call at our Chicago offices for particulars of our *personal test* **on deposit offer and list of prominent endorsers who will answer inquiries. Physicians cordially invited to investigate. Address or call (call if you can).**

Stolz Electrophone Co., 929 Stewart Bldg., Chicago.

Branch Offices:—Philadelphia, Pa.—Cincinnati, Ohio.—Seattle, Wash.—Indianapolis, Ind.—Des Moines, Iowa—Toronto, Canada.

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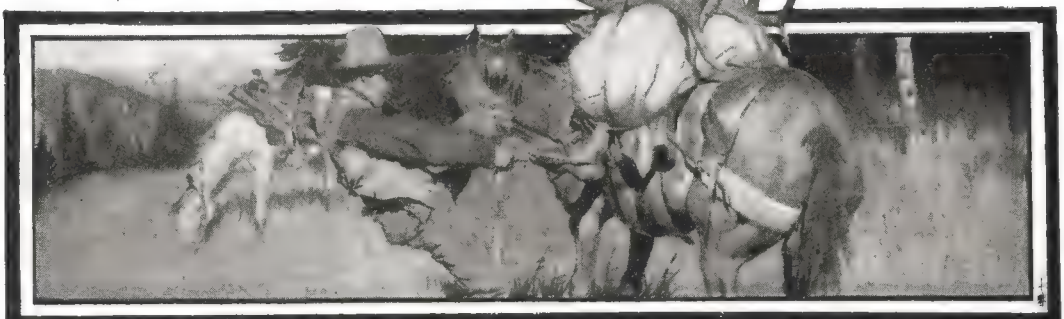

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Does away with pressing (which injures the cloth.)
Garments always look like new—
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Any pair can be removed without disturbing the rest.
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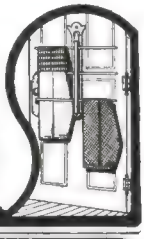

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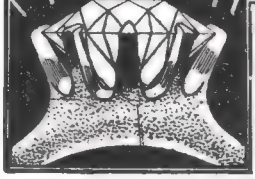

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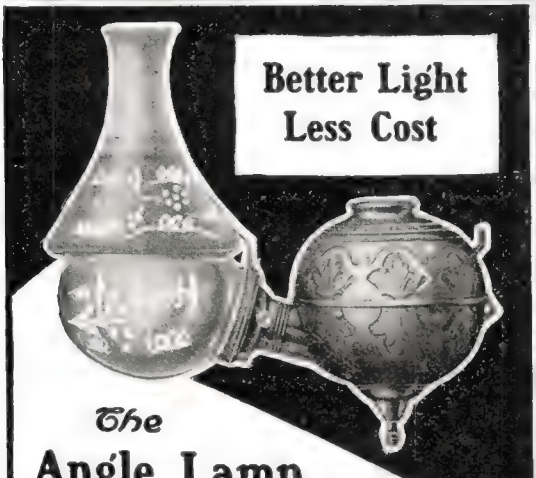

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We will send to any address our interesting and instructive book telling all about correct care of the hair, proper styles for dressing, and how to become beautiful. The book also describes upwards of 500 complete lines of switches of every description.

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in many instances. No face massage, no steaming, no cream or so-called skin foods, no masks or rollers, nothing to inject, but a marvelous, simple discovery that works surprising wonders in EIGHT HOURS BY THE CLOCK.

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Buy Both or Either of these Garments Now
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No. 70x10 M—The "New York" Waist is an entirely new creation this season; a beautiful dressy model and is made of good quality white lawn; the front is artistically designed with a fancy shaped yoke, formed of numerous rows of Valenciennes lace insertion and four rows of dainty embroidery insertion; lace insertion below yoke; the sleeves are three-quarter length; tucked and lace edged collar and cuffs; fastens in back; size 32 to 44 bust; **a $1.50 value specially priced at $1.00**

70x10 M WAIST $1.00

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No. 79x10 M—This "Broadway" Skirt is without exception the greatest value ever offered in a good, serviceable Wash Skirt; is made of good quality white, tan or black linene; also in black duck with white dot and blue duck with white dot; it is trimmed with two box plaits in front and is closely side plaited over hips and in back; finished at bottom with a deep, loose stylish fold of self material; length 37 to 43 inches; it is equal in style and quality to skirts selling at triple the price we ask; **a wonderful bargain at 95c**

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Send today for our beautifully illustrated Midsummer Catalogue; it contains the greatest money saving bargains of the year in New York City's Newest Styles for Hot Weather Wear.

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WEIGHT 16 POUNDS COSTS LITTLE

Requires little water

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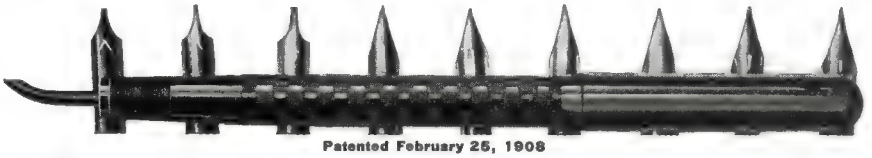

Patented February 25, 1908

It makes no difference if you use **Sanford's Fountain Penholder.** The point that will appeal to you is **you can use your favorite Steel Pen Point,** change as often as you like—equally serviceable in office, home and school—made entirely of highest grade turned hard rubber—plain or chased—nothing to get out of order—never leaks or blots—sent postpaid anywhere for $1.00—money order, stamps or check. Money back if not satisfied.

THE SANFORD PEN CO.

New and altogether different. **154 E. 105th Street, Cleveland, Ohio.**

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I can DOUBLE your Salary or Income

by teaching you how to write catchy, intelligent advertising. My system of instruction by Mail is the only one in existence that has the hearty endorsement of the great experts and publishers and I am anxious to send my Prospectus, together with the most remarkable facsimile proof ever given in the history of correspondence instruction, if you are interested. I will show you how to earn from $25 to $100 per week.

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We will teach you the Real Estate, General Brokerage, and Insurance Business, and appoint you

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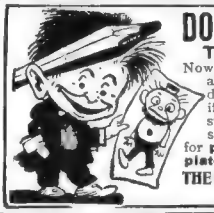
You may become independent and in a short time be in a position to **earn from $15 to $30** per week in a pleasant profession by **our simple home study course,** requiring small expense and a part of your spare time each day. **Our school is the oldest in America,** and is affiliated with one of the largest hospitals in this city. Our Medical Staff has entire charge of all correspondence and are men of long experience. **Our diplomas are recognized** by leading physicians and hospitals in the U. S. Send today for booklet telling all about nursing. **Sent free. CHICAGO COR. SCHOOL OF NURSING, 1206—46 VAN BUREN ST., CHICAGO. ILL.**



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That's all we want to know

Now we **will not** give you any **grand prize**—or a lot of **free stuff** if you answer this ad. Nor do we claim to make you **rich in a week.** But if you are anxious to develop your talent with a successful cartoonist, so you can make money, send a copy of this picture with **6c.** in stamps for **portfolio** of cartoons and **sample lesson plate,** and let us explain.

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Show Card Writing or **Lettering** by mail. Only field not overcrowded. My instruction is practical, personal and thorough. My graduates are successful. Easy terms. Write for large catalogue.

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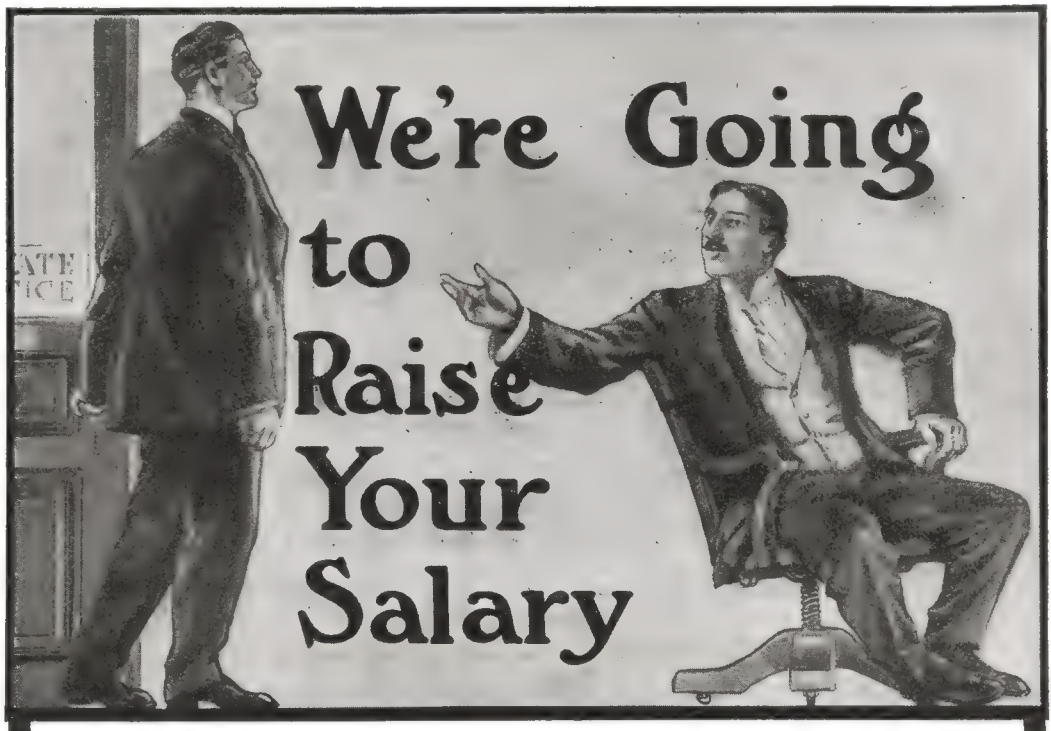
CORRESPONDENCE INSTITUTE OF AMERICA, BOX M, SCRANTON, PENNA.



Such scenes as this are actually taking place every day. Invariably the man who gets the raise is the ***trained*** man—the expert—while the ***untrained*** man plods along at the same old wage.

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Illustrator	Civil Engineer
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CURE YOURSELF OR YOUR CHILD AT HOME, WITHOUT PAIN OR INCONVENIENCE, OF ANY SPINAL DEFORMITY WITH THE WONDERFUL SHELDON APPLIANCE.

No matter how old you are, or how long you have suffered, or what kind of spinal deformity you have, there is a cure for you by means of the wonderful Sheldon Appliance. It is as firm as steel and yet elastic at the right places. It gives an even, perfect support to the weakened or deformed spine. It is as easy to take off or put on as a coat, causes no inconvenience, and does not chafe or irritate. No one can notice you are wearing it.

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The Sheldon Appliance is made to order to fit each individual perfectly. It weighs ounces, where other supports weigh pounds. The price is within the reach of all. Hundreds of doctors recommend it.

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Contains 200 pages in two colors which are blank except for the ornamental headings and decorations. There is a place for everything dear to the girl graduate's heart and memory, such as class colors, autographs, photographs, officers, teachers, class prophecy, her invitations, social events, press notices, the presents, jokes and frolics, etc., etc. A beautiful and dainty gift volume.

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$3 a Day Sure

Send us your address and we will show you how to make $3 a day absolutely sure; we furnish the work and teach you free, you work in the locality where you live. Send us your address and we will explain the business fully, remember we guarantee a clear profit of $3 for every day's work, absolutely sure. Write at once.

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FACE POWDER

Perfect as a Rose

smooth and velvety—with the healthful coloring of youth is the complexion of every woman who uses **Lablache**, the modern beautifier. It prevents blemishes, caused by sun and wind, absorbs perspiration and overcomes that shiny and sallow appearance. It is the acme of purity—an everyday toilet necessity.

Refuse substitutes. They may be dangerous. Flesh, White, Pink or Cream, 50c. a box, of druggists or by mail. *Send 10c. for sample.*

BEN. LEVY CO., French Perfumers
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Rhodes' New Hair Remover will instantly and perfectly remove undesirable hair from the face, neck, etc. Price **$1.**

FREE TRIAL We are not afraid to have you try this wonderful preparation, and you may do so FREE. If you will send us 10c. to cover cost of postage and packing, we will send you a trial bottle, not a dollar bottle, of course, but sufficient to remove considerable hair and furnish a good test. Address the Hair Specialists,

A. B. RHODES CO., Lowell, Mass.

RHODES REJUVENATOR RESTORES GRAY HAIR. MAKES IT GROW. | Price $1.00 bot.

A SKIN OF BEAUTY IS A JOY FOREVER.

DR. T. FELIX GOURAUD'S ORIENTAL CREAM OR MAGICAL BEAUTIFIER

Removes Tan, Pimples, Freckles, Moth Patches, Rash and Skin diseases, and every blemish on beauty, and defies detection. It has stood the test of 60 years, and is so harmless we taste it to be sure it is properly made. Accept no counterfeit of similar name. Dr. L. A. Sayre said to a lady of the haut-ton (a patient): "As you ladies will use them, I recommend

'Gouraud's Cream'

as the least harmful of all the Skin preparations." For sale by all druggists and Fancy Goods Dealers in the U. S., Canadas, and Europe.

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Trade Mark Registered.

A Perfect Complexion Beautifier and Remover of Wrinkles, Will Develop or Reduce.

DR. JOHN WILSON GIBBS' THE ONLY

Electric Massage Roller

(Patented United States, Europe, Canada.)

"A new beautifier which is *warranted to produce* a perfect complexion, *removing wrinkles* and *all* facial blemishes. Will develop or reduce, as desired.—*Chicago Tribune.*

"This delicate Electric Beautifier removes all acial blemishes. It is the *only positive remover* of wrinkles and crow's-feet. It never fails to perform all that is expected."—*Chicago Times-Herald.*

"At one stroke the art of acquiring beauty has become simplified. Any woman may achieve beauty *at home and unaided.* She will discharge the army of beautifiers she employs to exercise their arts upon her, and buy an Electric Massage Roller. The Roller will do the rest."—*N. Y. World.*

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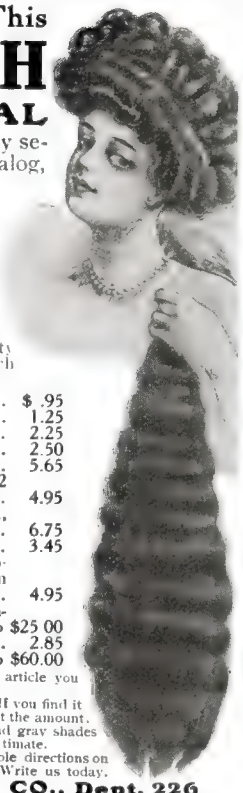

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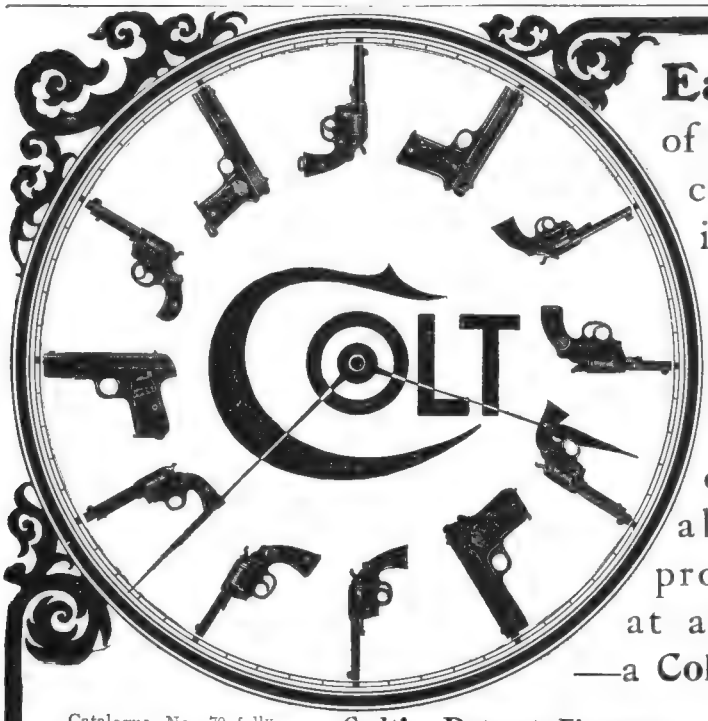

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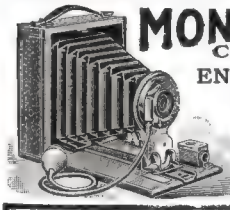

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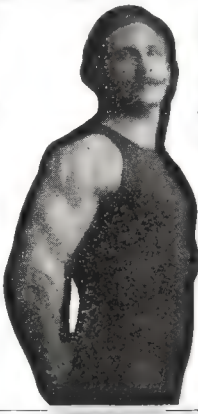

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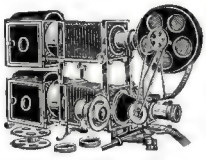

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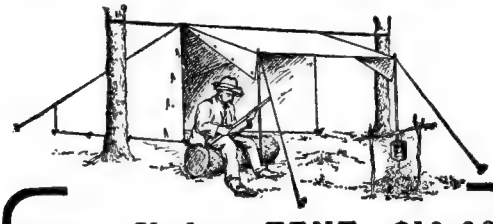

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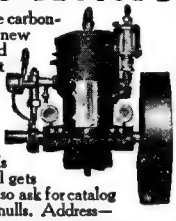

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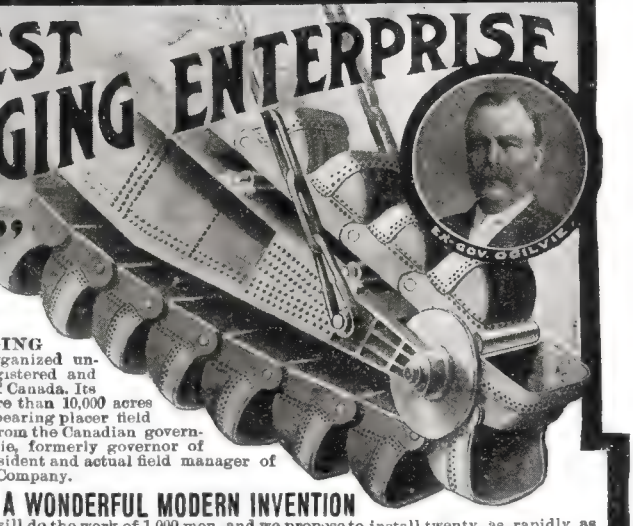

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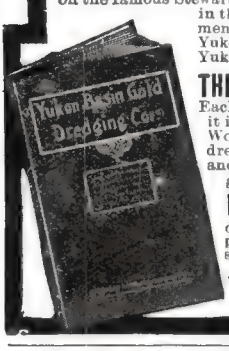

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Strang in *Isotta* car, the winner of Briarcliff race. Picture shows bad turn near Vallahalla

THE BRIARCLIFF RACE

WHEN the line-up for the Briarcliff trophy was announced — a road-race for stock-cars — there was shown the largest entry-list of any automobile race ever held in this country. The foreign and American entries were evenly divided, there being eleven of each.

The course selected in Westchester County, New York, was exceedingly dangerous, there being very few straightaways, the road twisting and turning in serpentine fashion around hills, over rivers, and across bridges. The circuit of 32½ miles with a 2½ mile control was considered by those who profess to know, to be the most dangerous course ever selected for road-racing. Drivers like Cedrino and Satori, who have driven in nearly all the European events, claim that in no one of them had the chances of mishap been so great.

It was also the greatest race ever held from a spectacular standpoint, and from the time that the starter's pistol announced the first car off until the third car had finished, the excitement was indescribable. The first car away was the 40-h.p. *Bianchi* driven by Satori, with Cedrino's 60-h.p. *Fiat* second, and Herbert Lytle's 50-h.p. *Apperson,* third; Louis Strang, in a 50-h.p. *Isotta,* fourth, was followed by Leland in a 30-h.p. *Stearns;* Parker, 60-h.p. *Fiat;* Michiner, 45-h.p. *Lozier;* Vaughan, 30-h.p. *Stearns;* Mulford, 45-h.p. *Lozier;* Murphy, 35-h.p. *Maja;* Poole, 50-h.p. *Isotta;* Roberts, 60-h.p. *Thomas;* Oldfield, 30-h.p. *Stearns;* Bernin, 35-h.p. *Renault;* Robertson, 50-h.p. *Panhard;* Hilliard, 40-h.p. *Hol-Tan;* Campbell, 40-h.p. *Allen-Kingston;* Bloch, 35-h.p. *Renault;* Harding, 50-h.p. *Isotta;* Bergdoll, 60-h.p. *Benz;* Seymour, 50-h.p. *Simplex;* Watson, 50-h.p. *Simplex.*

E. P. CHALFANT
Who as General Manager has just been placed at the head of the Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers

Cedrino, whose driving here and abroad has attracted the motoring-public, was by long odds the favorite, with Lytle, Strang, and Vaughan close seconds. From the very start of the race, however, it was seen that Strang in the *Isotta* was going to make every effort to capture the trophy. Although he started fourth, or four minutes behind the first car, he finished the first lap several sec-

onds ahead of any other, and he maintained this position until the end of the race. Cedrino, who was evidently driving to a schedule, realized too late that his average speed had not been fast enough, for when he discovered, at the end of the fifth lap, that he was only one of three in close competition for the second place, he began his daring and spectacular driving, doing the course in the fastest time of the day—36 minutes and 48 seconds—which, considering the great number of turns and the almost insurmountable hills, was a remarkable rate of speed. But this speed came too late, and he finished seven minutes behind the winner and seven minutes ahead of the third man. Strang's last lap's time was 5:14:13 1/5; Cedrino, 5:21:5 3/5; Vaughan, 5:28:29 2/5; Lytle, 5:39:15 2/5; Satori, 5:53:45 3/5.

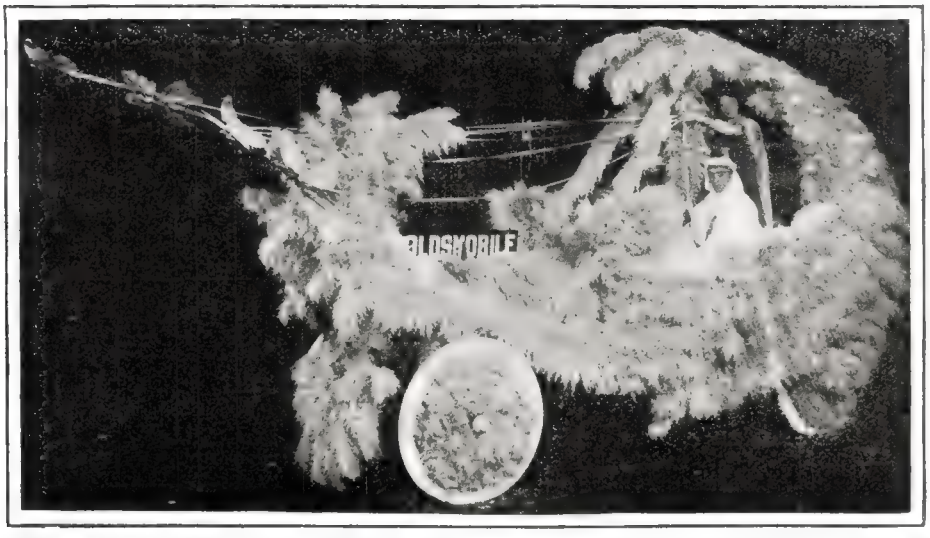
That the race will go down into history as one of the most remarkable road-events ever held, is unquestioned, and the results accruing from it will be beneficial, not only to the general public but to the manufacturers. It shows the possibility of the stock-car, its durability under the trying conditions of both hill-climb, speed, and the strain of continuous work. No fatality occurred, although the course was the most dangerous ever raced over, and no militia were used.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AUTOMOBILE

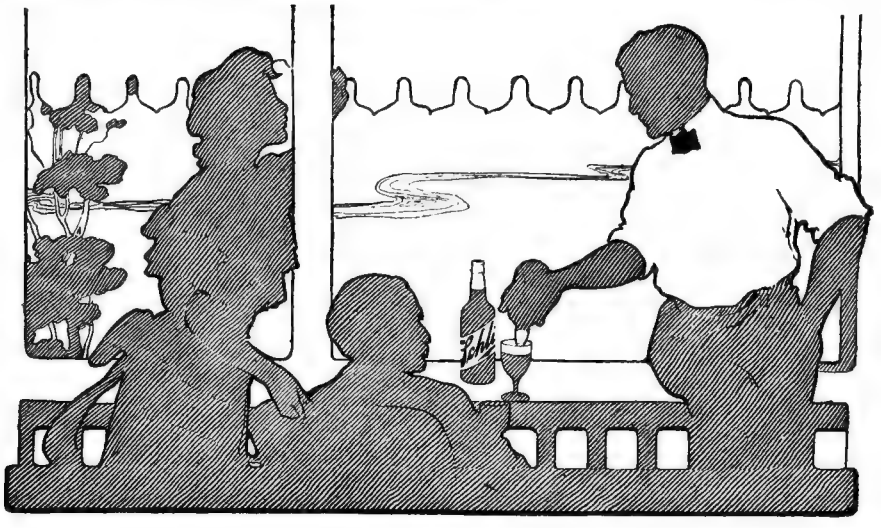
THE tenth anniversary of the practical use of the automobile was celebrated in many parts of the country, Chicago and New York both held carnivals in commemoration of the event. The festival held in New York was of particular interest, for many of those now interested in the industry saw the car which in 1898 made a trip up Broadway to Grant's Tomb and returned, considered a remarkable feat at that time.

The week opened up with a gorgeous parade of nearly two thousand cars, divided into four divisions. The first division consisted of old types built prior to 1903 and which are still operative; the second of 1908 models entered by dealers and owners. The third was the decorated division, and the fourth the commercial section. Nearly two hundred thousand people witnessed the parade, which, from an industrial standpoint was a triumph to the energies and ingenuity of the inventive and engineering mind.

Following the parade the most notable hill-climb in the history of the sport, in point of speed and number of entries, was run off on the Fort George course. There were eighty-three starters, divided into eleven classes. The best time for the climb was Walter White's *White Steam-*



Oldsmobile which took first prize in the decorated division of the great parade in New York during Carnival week



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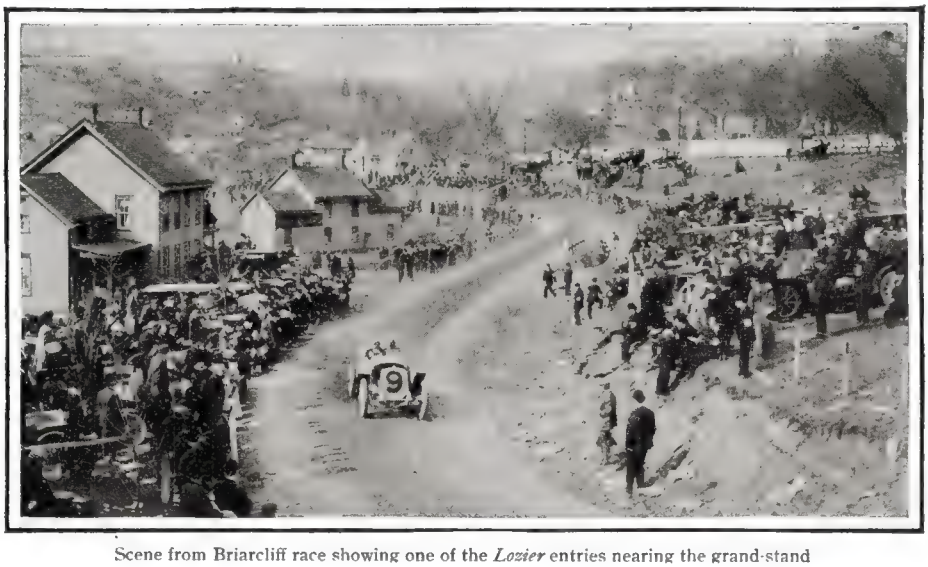
The Beer That Made Milwaukee Famous

Scene from the Briarcliff race showing *Bianchi* car rounding one of the hard turns

er which did the climb in 32 1/5 seconds. One of the best records for gasoline cars was that made by Edgar Apperson driving a 62-horsepower *Apperson* negotiating the hill in 36 seconds, which was followed closely by Cedrino driving the *Fiat* in 37 seconds and Robertson in a 50-horsepower *Stevens-Duryea* in but the fraction of three-fifths of a second more (37 3/5 seconds).

In the four-cylinder gasoline-cars selling at $4,000 and over, Guy Vaughan in a *Stearns*, climbed the hill in 42 1/5 seconds. A 30-horsepower *Corbin* in the $2,000 class made it in the very excellent time of 33 4/5 seconds, while the *Stevens-Duryea* driven by Robertson was the leader of the cars of the six-cylinder class by accomplishing the feat in 38 4/5 seconds.



Scene from Briarcliff race showing one of the *Lozier* entries nearing the grand-stand

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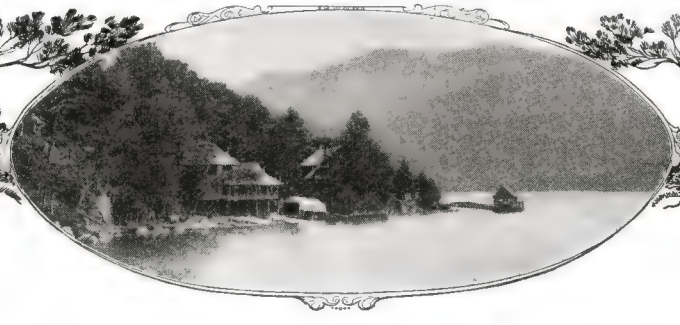

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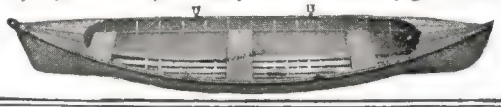

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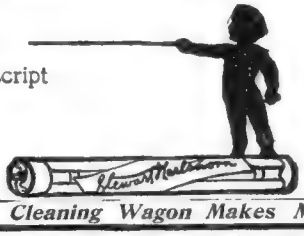

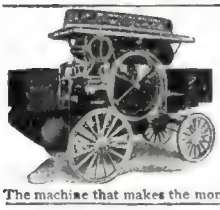

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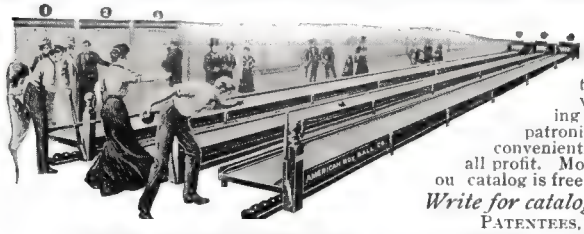

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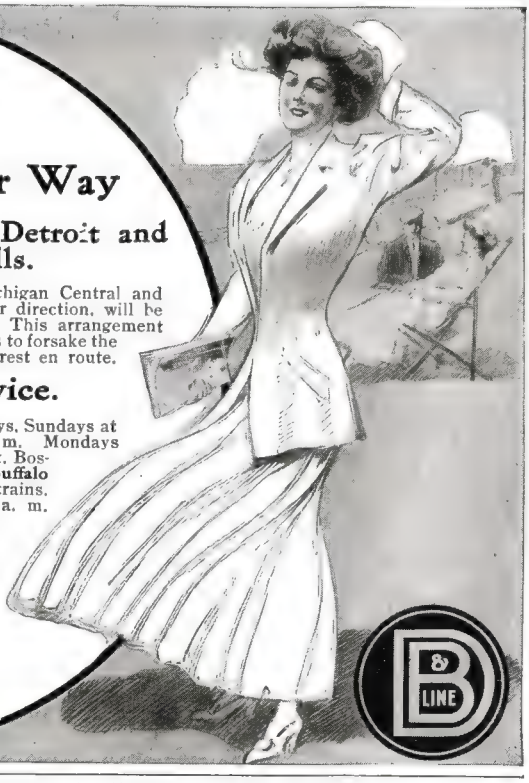

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Clears the Skin of Wrinkles, Frowns, Freckles, Moth, Tan, Lines, Spots, Scars, Pittings, and keeps the Skin young and healthy. By mail, including instrument, 2 composite stones and creme.

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Instantly Removes all superfluous Hair.
Coloroses, One Application Hair Tint $1.00
Woodbury's Ingrowing Nail Cure $1.00
Instant relief and positive cure.
Hygienic New Skin Soap, postpaid, **25** cents.
Hygienic New Hair Soap, postpaid, **25** cents.
Booklet Woodbury's 101 Remedies, Mailed Free.

We teach all branches of Woodbury's up-to-date method of Dermatology. Office or mail course. Address Dept. 9E.

The Facial Cultivating Co., 30 West 22d Street, New York
JOHN H. WOODBURY, Pres., 37 years' experience.
Wanted: Representative in each locality.

We Will Send You

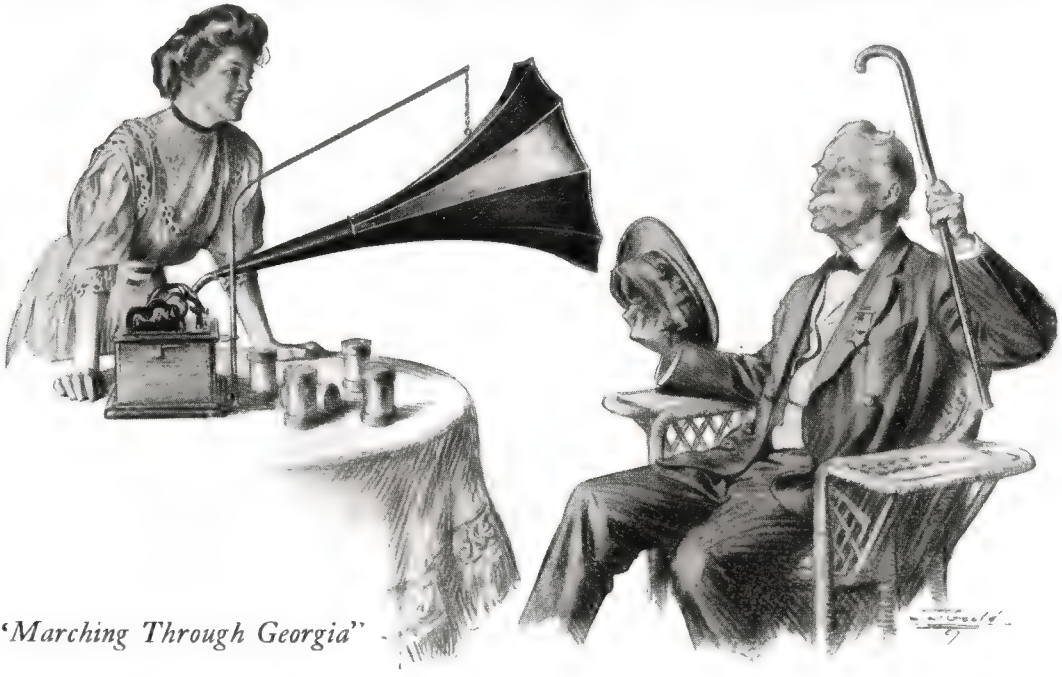
FREE—a Generous Sample Box of
CARMEN POWDER

for the name and address of your druggist. CARMEN POWDER conceals defects of the complexion and yet doesn't show powder. Distinctly different and better than all other powders because it is so fine and so delicately tinted that it blends exquisitely with the complexion, giving the skin that clear transparency and velvety texture that only a perfect complexion possesses naturally.

Delightfully perfumed with a rich and delicate odor. Soft and light as down, doesn't blow off or become spotty—not only harmless to any complexion but contains ingredients that make it highly beneficial to the skin. Its extreme fineness makes it the *only* powder that Brunettes can use without showing, as well as the *best* powder for Blondes. Made in four tints—flesh, cream, pink and white. If your dealer can't supply you the makers

STAFFORD-MILLER COMPANY,
517 OLIVE ST., ST. LOUIS, MO.,

will send it postpaid any place in the United States on receipt of **price 50c a box.** For sale by best druggists and toilet goods dealers almost everywhere. Write to-day for free sample, mentioning tint desired.



"Marching Through Georgia"

The EDISON PHONOGRAPH

represents not only the original sound-reproducing idea invented by Mr. Edison, but it also represents every improvement Mr. Edison has been able to make in his original invention.

It is an improvement that the Edison Phonograph uses a reproducing point of such hardness that it lasts for years and does away with the annoyance of continually having to change needles.

It is an improvement that the horn is constructed in such a way as to give the greatest clearness and volume of sound, without sacrificing the quality of the sound.

It is an improvement that the Edison Phonograph and Edison Records can be bought so cheaply that they make good music possible to all.

Did you ever try making your own Records? Write to us or ask your dealer about this.

THE TWENTY-FOUR NEW RECORDS FOR JUNE

are made up of some of the cleverest song records and some of the best instrumental records that the well-known artists on the Edison staff have ever made for us. Hear them at any Edison store on May 25th. You'll be sure to want some of them for your Phonograph.

TRADE MARK

Thomas A Edison

Ask your dealer or write to us for the new catalogue of Edison Phonographs, THE PHONOGRAM, describing each Record in detail; the SUPPLEMENTAL CATALOGUE, listing the new June Records, and the COMPLETE CATALOGUE, listing all Edison Records now in existence. Records in all foreign languages.

NATIONAL PHONOGRAPH COMPANY, 25 Lakeside Avenue, Orange, N. J.

The New No. 3
Bulls-Eye Kodak

Pictures 3¼ x 4¼. Price, $8.00.

There was never a camera that gave more uniformly satisfactory results in the hands of the amateur than the No. 2 Bulls-Eye Kodak. Its simplicity and accuracy did away with most of the opportunities for making mistakes. The No. 3 Bulls-Eye is simply a little larger model of the same camera, making pictures of a more desirable shape and size. *Anybody can make good pictures with a Bulls-Eye Kodak.*

The No. 3 Bulls-Eye Kodak has the Eastman Rotary Shutter that is always set, meniscus achromatic lens, three stops, two finders, two tripod sockets, and loads in daylight with Kodak Cartridges for two, four, six or twelve exposures. Pictures 3¼ x 4¼ inches. Price, $8.00.

Catalog of Kodaks free at any dealers or by mail.

EASTMAN KODAK CO., Rochester, N. Y., *The Kodak City.*

A Summer Necessity

Because the New Perfection Wick Blue Flame Oil Cook-Stove concentrates heat at the openings on the stove top, it boils and bakes in less time than a coal or wood stove which wastes heat by radiating to the farthest corner of the room.

This is the reason, too, why the "New Perfection" keeps your kitchen so uniformly cool while you're working in it.

This wonderful comfort-quality, combined with great convenience and economy, makes the

NEW PERFECTION
Wick Blue Flame Oil Cook-Stove

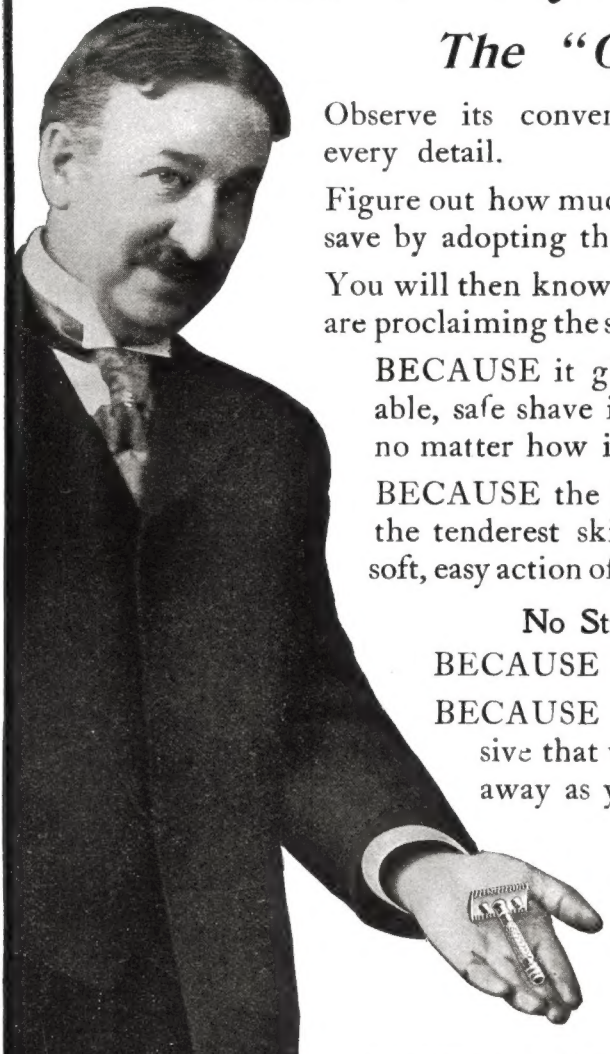
the best of all stoves—especially for summer use. If, heretofore, you have considered it impossible to do kitchen work in a restful way, a trial of the "New Perfection" Oil Stove will surprise you. Made in three sizes, fully warranted. If not with your dealer, write our nearest agency.

The **Rayo LAMP** If you are troubled by flickering gas and large quarterly bills for the same, get a Rayo Lamp—the best, handsomest and most economical light for a home. If not with your dealer, write our nearest agency.

STANDARD OIL COMPANY
(Incorporated)

Dissect My Razor

The "GILLETTE"



Observe its convenience—its perfection in every detail.

Figure out how much time and money you can save by adopting the "Gillette" habit.

You will then know why over two million men are proclaiming the superiority of the "Gillette"

BECAUSE it gives you a clean, comfortable, safe shave in three to five minutes—no matter how inexperienced you are.

BECAUSE the harshest beard, though on the tenderest skin, willingly yields to the soft, easy action of the keen "Gillette" blade.

No Stropping—No Honing

BECAUSE the holder lasts a lifetime.

BECAUSE its blades are so inexpensive that when dull you throw them away as you would an old pen.

King C. Gillette

The Gillette Safety Razor Set consists of a triple silver-plated holder, 12 double-edged flexible blades—24 keen edges, packed in a velvet-lined leather case, and the price is $5.00.

Combination Sets from $6.50 to $50.00

Ask your dealer for the "Gillette" to-day. If substitutes are offered, refuse them, and write us at once for our booklet and free trial offer.

GILLETTE SALES COMPANY

210 Times Building, New York | **210 Kimball Building, BOSTON** | **210 Stock Exchange Building, Chicago**

Gillette Safety Razor

NO STROPPING NO HONING

Painted by George Gibbs for Cream of Wheat Company *Copyright 1907 by Cream of Wheat Company*

"HULLY GEE! IT'S CREAM OF WHEAT"

For Out-of-Door Complexions

Sun and wind make the skin dry, rough, tender and sore. Hinds' Honey and Almond Cream soothes, cools and softens most delightfully. Street dust is unclean and disease-laden; the tiny skin-pores become clogged and trouble follows unless they are rightly cleansed. Hinds' Cream is antiseptic and remarkably cleansing; it penetrates the pores, neutralizes impurities, stimulates and feeds the tissues, prevents and heals eruptions.

Hinds' Honey and Almond Cream

should be used before exposure to the weather and again on returning indoors. It thus protects the skin and preserves the complexion against **Sunburn, Windburn** and chapping. Best for babies' delicate skin and for men who shave. Positively guaranteed **not** to cause a growth of hair. Contains no grease, bleach or chemicals.

Avoid substitutes:—there's only **one** Hinds' Honey and Almond Cream. All others will disappoint you. Insist upon having **Hinds'** Cream. 50c at your dealer's, or postpaid by us for same amount. Write for free sample and booklet.

A. S. HINDS

11 West St., Portland, Me.

PRESS OF STEARNS BROS. & CO., CHICAGO

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We couldn't improve the powder so we improved the box
CASHMERE BOUQUET TALC POWDER BORIC-ARTISEPTIC
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Colgate's Unscented Talc Powder
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Comes out a ribbon lies flat on the brush

Choice of three kinds in the original screw top boxes

A perfect Shaving Stick in the original nickeled box

Dental Cream in an Original Package

It is easier to copy Colgate packages than to match Colgate quality. Remember that when you are offered something "just as good" in a package "like Colgate's."

Also remember that the name "Colgate" on soaps, powders and perfumes corresponds to the "Sterling" mark on silver.

Also, that a household with but one Colgate Comfort is like a garden with only one flower.

A Trial Package Free. Send us the name of the newest of these original Colgate Comforts (pictured above) and we will send you a trial size package of it.

Only one free package to a person. Offer in this magazine good until July 1st, 1908.

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Makers of Cashmere Bouquet Toilet Soap, and Colco, the new vegetable-oil toilet soap. Also Monad Violet and Cashmere Bouquet Handkerchief Perfumes, Toilet Waters and Sachet Powders. Also Quinol Hair Tonic.